THE Nation.

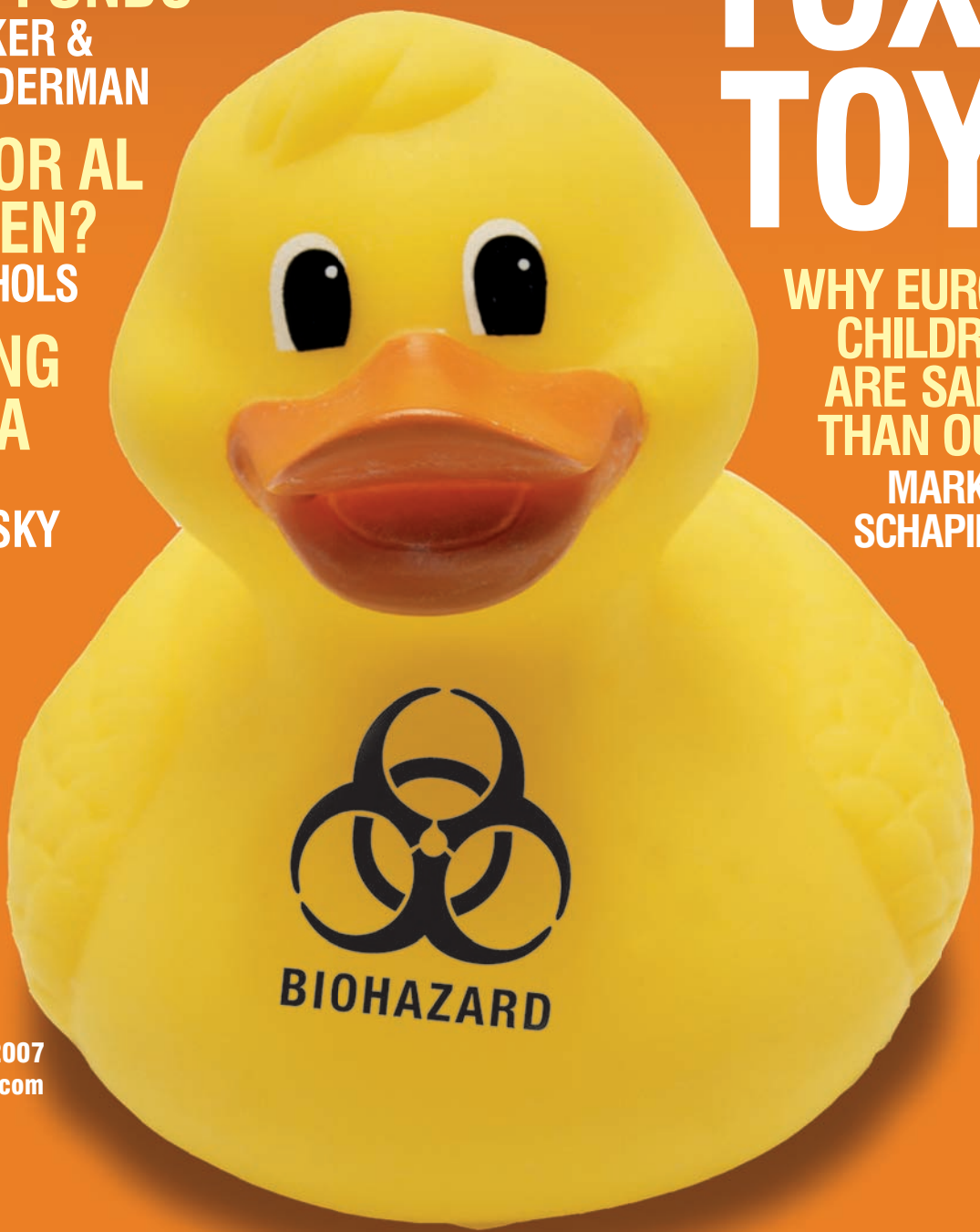
TOXIC TOYS

WHY EUROPE'S CHILDREN ARE SAFER THAN OURS
MARK SCHAPIRO

HILLARY'S HEDGE FUNDS
RUSS BAKER & ADAM FEDERMAN

SENATOR AL FRANKEN?
JOHN NICHOLS

PURRING PICABIA
BARRY SCHWABSKY



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Letters

Keith! Keith! He's Our Man!

Brooklyn, N.Y.
Re "Olbermann Rules!" by Marvin Kitman [Oct. 8]: bravo! A perceptive, thoughtful article about an articulate and courageous man. Thank heavens there's still intelligent life in the universe.
Susan Montague

Cottonwood, Ariz.
Thank you for affirming my belief that Keith Olbermann is the only news person worth paying attention to. It does my heart good to finally have someone who voices my concerns for the sanity of this country and my belief that we are better than the crackpots running it.
Kathleen Chaney

Mercer Island, Wash.
Finally, a much-respected publication has given Keith O. his due. His is the most refreshing, articulate, well-informed, passionate and persuasive voice and mind on network TV. His demeanor is both dignified and droll, and he seems never at a loss for the right word. I think Ed Murrow would be proud to have his signature sign-off repeated by one of the very few in his class.
Norman Anderson

Modesto, Calif.
Marvin Kitman's piece brought tears to my 77-year-old eyes, validating a point I've tried to make during a half-century in print journalism. We newsies have not only a right but a duty to transcend mere uninvolved reportage by interpreting and commenting on events.
Fred Herman

St. Paul, Minn.
I strongly disagree with the notion that evening news shows need "less 'objectivity' and more analysis." What the public needs is more journalists who understand that objectivity, analysis and, yes, passion, are not mutually exclusive. Molly Ivins never lacked passion, but she was never fact-challenged either. Nor is Keith Olbermann.

I concede that objectivity is not the sole journalistic virtue. The most objective news is probably on NPR, which is why NPR is so boring. But I thank God we still have NPR every time I see or hear corporate broadcast media, that wasteland of debased, sensationalistic, moment-by-moment coverage, devoid of context or depth.

I am grateful to Marvin Kitman for bringing Olbermann to my attention. I watched him for the first time and agree that he's brilliant. Olbermann proves that lefties can be entertaining, too.
Eric Paul Jacobsen

La Mirada, Calif.
Keith is passionate, principled, must-see TV at our house. Wrote the first fan mail of my life and urged MSNBC to notice the modern-day Edward R. Murrow amid the slop posing as news on other channels. Some nights we stand up and cheer; others, we share his sadness and anger at the loss of our beloved country.
Jeanne Khan

Savannah
Contrary to Marvin Kitman, Ed Murrow never anchored the *CBS Evening News*. Walter Cronkite's only predecessor conducted the 1948-62 newscast *Douglas Edwards With the News* and the *CBS News With Douglas Edwards*. Murrow's news-centered TV series was the 1951-58 documentary *See It Now*, the sequel to his *Hear It Now* radio series.
Terry K. Sheldahl

Flagstaff, Ariz.
I find it remarkable that anyone besides Keith Olbermann thinks he is the reincarnation of Murrow. Edward R. must be spinning. MSNBC has had a succession of personalities who rise and fade away as the public tires of their shtick. I expect Keith to someday be sharing a Court TV desk with Ashley Banfield.
Robert Stephens

Morgan Hill, Calif.
I disagree with Kitman's assertion that the Murrow legend began with his eve-

(continued on page 30)

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Inconvenient Truth-Tellers

The world's leading crusaders against global warming are finally getting their day in the sun. The Nobel Peace Prize, awarded October 12 to Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, comes as vindication of decades of research and advocacy on an issue that for too long was greeted with skepticism and easy laugh lines. It is no longer possible to deny or complacently accept the dire consequences of environmental abuse, and the Nobel committee rightly credited Gore and the UN-affiliated IPCC for this rapid shift in public consciousness.

EDITORIAL

Although we honor Gore's singular contribution as a citizen crusader, we also remember that as a politician he was often eager to settle for watered-down compromises. It was Vice President Gore, after all, who allowed glacier-sized loopholes for US polluters when he negotiated the final terms of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, and it was the Clinton/Gore Administration that pandered to the timber industry. The author of *Earth in the Balance* helped tilt the scales toward big business during the Clinton years, when free-trade agreements flourished and global environmental standards dropped significantly.

Gore didn't mobilize support for effective climate change legislation until he left office. It is a telling commentary on the corrupting influence of our political system that only after he was freed from big-money pressures and cautious consultants did he find a way to speak out on the issue with a sense of moral conviction. And it is a testament to second acts in American life that Gore the un-President has reinvented himself to become, in the words of the Nobel committee, "probably the single individual who has done most to create greater worldwide understanding of the measures that need to be adopted" to confront the climate crisis. He has been guided by the IPCC, an international community of experts who have been gathering data on global warming for two decades. Gore and the IPCC needed each other: Gore might have sounded like a kook were he not able to rely on the authoritativeness of the IPCC, while the IPCC might have been ignored without Gore's evangelism.

Subjecting its analyses to rigorous peer review and tossing out conclusions that did not meet a high standard of verifiability, the IPCC forged a scientific consensus. In a series of bulletproof reports this year, the panel bluntly concluded that climate change is undeniable, and undeniably caused by humans. The question we must ask now is what to do about it.

The IPCC has commendably set the international agenda for addressing the crisis. Domestically, a bill sponsored by Senators Barbara Boxer and Bernie Sanders follows the spirit of the IPCC by calling for reduction of carbon emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and a further 80 percent reduction by 2050. Unfortunately, this bill must compete with industry-friendly compromises that purport to address the crisis but would effectively legitimize the status quo.

The Nobel committee gives its Peace Prize not only to recognize outstanding achievement but also to encourage bold action. Upon hearing of the award, Gore said, "This is just the beginning." Let's hope so. And the next phase must focus on solutions. Gore has been great at outlining the problem, but the feel-good eco-consciousness he prescribes is meek. Since we are facing a "planetary emergency," as Gore has described it, then surely we must do more than recycle cans and bottles, switch to energy-saving light bulbs and throw a few concerts.

At last the world's attention is focused on the fate of our planet. All of us, people and governments everywhere, must get down to work.

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Katrina vanden Heuvel: Ballotground Challenges the War
Lakshmi Chaudhry: Latina America Comes of Age
Amy Alexander: Terry McMillan takes on Ghetto Lit

WEB LETTERS On Ehren Watada's double jeopardy, the Armenian genocide, Steven Holmes and Ken Burns

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UAW R.I.P.?

National strikes at two of the three major American auto manufacturers have drawn much attention to Detroit in recent weeks, but the latest round of contract negotiations makes it clear that the future of American auto unionism (if there is one) must lie elsewhere. The historic concessions made by the United Auto Workers, billed as necessary measures to keep the reeling Big Three from bankruptcy, in fact represent something far more ominous. To "save" the domestic auto industry, the union may end up killing itself.

The lowlights of the General Motors contract—the model for subsequent deals with Chrysler and Ford—are the creation of an independent benefit trust to assume GM's healthcare obligations to 340,000 UAW retirees and a tiered wage-and-benefit scale for future hires. As many as one-third of GM's hourly jobs may be reclassified as "non-core," with new workers receiving fewer benefits and earning roughly half the wages of current employees. The implications for future organizing are likely to be profound—as Gary Chaison, professor of industrial relations at Clark University, told the *Detroit Free Press*, "two-tiered wage structures are not what unions are about, when they talk about solidarity."

COMMENT

The contract will reduce the gap between labor costs at unionized GM plants and those at foreign-owned US plants—all thirty-three of which are nonunion—by as much as 50 percent. The *Wall Street Journal* summed up the significance of the deal: "Toyota Motor Corp., not GM or the UAW, now sets the bar for labor costs in the U.S. auto industry."

For the UAW, once the standard-bearer for industrial unionism, that shift may be fatal. So long as the union remains tied to Detroit and committed to the "jointness" business model that has created the ideological framework for repeated concessions, the UAW seems fated to become, at best, industrially irrelevant. And maybe worse—this past February, the *Free Press* reported that at a Toyota plant in Georgetown, Kentucky, "workers for a foreign automaker for the first time averaged more in base pay and bonuses than UAW members working for domestic automakers." It was a shocking sign that autoworkers may no longer see a material benefit from joining the UAW.

Hourly wages for union and nonunion autoworkers in fact have been roughly comparable for some time, although the UAW's vaunted benefits packages have brought total compensation for members well above that of their nonunion peers. By saving as much as $30 an hour on benefits, foreign automakers have been able to dampen interest in the union by paying wages well above the regional standard in places like Canton, Mississippi, where Nissan workers can make more than double the state average. The overall effect throughout the industry is downward pressure on earnings, as the Big Three demand concessions to remain competitive on labor costs, while the UAW mortgages what remains of the union advantage for dubious promises of job security.

So what is to be done? The answer, like the answer to much of the broader labor movement's woes, lies in the rural South and Midwest, where the proliferation of Toyota, Honda and other foreign-owned plants has accounted for virtually all re-

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cent growth in domestic auto manufacturing. After decades of watching plants close down and jobs move overseas, the UAW finds itself beset by a process of globalization-in-reverse, as foreign automakers increasingly "insource" production with cheap nonunion labor in right-to-work and Rust Belt states. The global South has arrived in Detroit's backyard.

Despite repeated efforts, the UAW has never been able to establish a foothold in these foreign-owned factories, strategically located in rural areas with a negligible union presence, antilabor state legislation and depressed local economies. Foreign automakers have deployed a range of tactics to keep union supporters out of factories. At a Honda plant scheduled to open in Greensburg, Indiana, next year, the company is imposing hiring restrictions based on residency to prevent thousands of out-of-work UAW members in the state from applying for the new jobs. Just outside the company's carefully delineated twenty-county hiring zone is Anderson, a city once home to three GM factories. All three have closed since 2003, putting some 22,000 UAW members out of a job, none of whom will be able to apply for work at the new Honda Greensburg facility.

If the UAW is to have a future, it must figure out a way into these foreign-owned factories. There have been encouraging signs at two Alabama plants, and in Georgetown, where Toyota workers have mounted what may be the most viable current organizing campaign, aided by groups like Jobs With Justice.

That kind of broad-based mobilization will be needed to counter the sophisticated antiunionism of foreign automakers. It will also require a political strategy to combat the "Third Worldization" of the American South, where a century and a half of economic depression has created an industrial backwater of nonunion labor. In its heyday, the UAW was often credited with setting the standard for the American middle class, and it could do the same today in the South. But unless it re-establishes an industrywide organizing presence, the union that long embodied the strength of the twentieth-century American labor movement may fast become a thing of the past. MAX FRASER

Max Fraser, a writer specializing in labor issues, is based in New York City.

Ink-Stained Marx

Karl Marx did his best writing on deadline. Commissioned by the Communist League in mid-1847 to write a "profession of faith," Marx and Engels procrastinated, traveled, experimented with form and might never have written the manifesto of the Communist Party if not for a sternly worded letter from the league ordering them to deliver the document by February 1, 1848.

A few all-nighters later, Marx produced a stirring document that by now has been read by tens of millions of people. Far fewer realize that regular deadline commentary provided Marx with the closest thing he ever had to actual employment. From 1852 to 1862 he was a regular London correspondent for the *New York Tribune*. All told, Marx contributed almost 500 columns to the *Tribune* (about a quarter of which were actually

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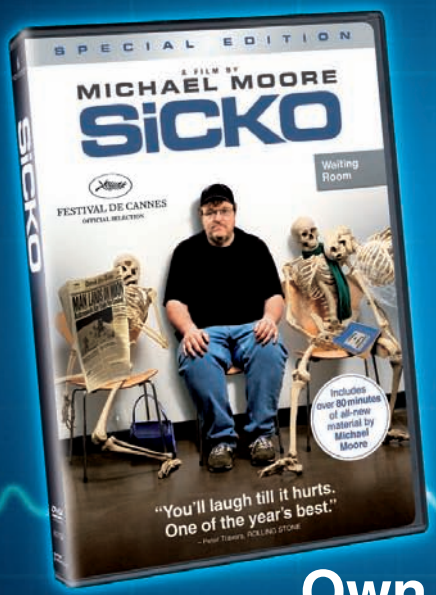
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THE PRICE OF GAS: As Burma's Saffron Revolutionaries were being rounded up and shot in the streets of Yangon, Secretary of State **Condoleezza Rice** was talking tough at the United Nations: "The United States is determined to keep an international focus on the travesty that is taking place." But casting a spotlight on Burma's junta has revealed some unsavory dealings by Rice's old friends. One of the key American corporations fueling the military regime is **Chevron**, which counted Rice as a director until 2001 and once named an oil tanker The Condoleezza Rice. Operating under a big fat loophole in US sanctions, the corporation continues to take a major cut of Burma's national gas projects—the top source of revenue for the regime. The regime's old partner, Unocal, was bought by Chevron after Unocal settled a lawsuit for using slave labor on its Burmese pipeline (lending new meaning to Chevron's slogan, "Human Energy"). For Chevron, complicity with despots is nothing new. A US court recently found evidence that the company paid and transported security forces who massacred protesting villagers in the Niger Delta in 1998–99. Chevron was also a major investor in apartheid South Africa.

Following in the steps of the anti-apartheid movement, Burma solidarity activists are calling for a boycott and divestment campaign against Chevron. They want the company to withdraw the royalties it pays the military junta and divert them to the elected government of **Aung San Suu Kyi**. Chevron's answer? The company says its investments in Burma "help improve the lives of the people they touch and thereby communicate our values."

MICHAEL GOULD-WARTOFSKY

$HOW ME THE MONEY: Third-quarter FEC reports reveal that **Hillary Clinton**'s campaign has $35 million on hand for the primaries, slightly more than **Barack Obama** ($32 million) and more than triple **John Edwards** ($10 million). From June to September, Clinton raked in more than $27 million, ahead of Obama ($21 million) and Edwards ($7 million). **Rudy Giuliani** led the GOP pack, raising $11.6 million in the third quarter. **Mitt Romney** raised $9.5 million (and loaned himself another $8.5 million). **Fred Thompson** collected more than $8 million, **John McCain** $5.7 million and Republican dissident **Ron Paul** $5.2 million.

$748,896 of Clinton's third-quarter donations came from Wall Street, where Obama raised $177,456, Giuliani $149,925 and Romney $133,875. But Rudy captured first place in the NASCAR primary, with donations from drivers **Jeff Gordon**, **Jimmie Johnson**, **Casey Mears** and NASCAR chairman Brian France. Clinton continued to impress the stars, taking in dough from Tobey Maguire, Jon Bon Jovi, Jodie Foster, Alec Baldwin, Renée Zellweger, Lionel Richie and Vivica A. Fox. Not to be outdone, Obama raised money this summer from Tyra Banks, Susan Sarandon, Cuba Gooding Jr., Jamie Foxx and Hugh Hefner. **Barry Manilow** wrote Ron Paul a check for $2,300.

FAMILY TIES: While promoting her memoir *Blue Skies*, **Lynne Cheney** revealed that her husband, **Dick Cheney**, and **Barack Obama** are related. They're eighth cousins who share a seventeenth-century ancestor. Asked for comment, the Obama campaign replied, "Every family has a black sheep."

BLACKWATER DOWN: Could Blackwater be cooked? It's too early to declare the largest private army in the world kaput, but CEO **Erik Prince** and company have had a rotten week. First, the Iraqi government issued its official report on the Nisour Square shooting—in which Blackwater guards opened fire on a civilian crowd, killing seventeen. Calling the guards' actions "premeditated murder," the report demands that the United States turn the guards over to Iraqi courts for prosecution. It also requests that Blackwater compensate each victim's family $8 million.

Then, as **Jeremy Scahill** reports at thenation.com, "the families of three Iraqis killed in the Nisour Square shootings filed a major lawsuit in a US federal court… charging that Blackwater's actions amounted to 'extra-judicial killing' and 'war crimes.'" Brought in part by the **Center for Constitutional Rights** under the Alien Tort Statute, the lawsuit "seeks punitive damages in an amount sufficient to punish Erik Prince and his Blackwater companies for their repeated callous killing of innocents." Lead attorney **Susan Burke** told Scahill that the Blackwater guards were no longer protecting their client and thus the suit alleges "that Blackwater personnel were not provoked, and that they had no legitimate reason to fire on civilians."

Finally, a recent *Los Angeles Times* article revealed that senior officials in the Defense and State departments are worried that private contractors in Iraq could be classified as "unlawful combatants" under the Geneva Convention. "Lawful combatants are nonmilitary personnel who operate under their military's chain of command," the article said. "Others may carry weapons in a war zone but may not use offensive force. Under the international agreements, they may only defend themselves." If Blackwater guards opened fire without provocation (i.e., if they used offensive force), as Burke's suit maintains, the accused may find that they would prefer due process in Iraqi or American courts. If they are designated "unlawful combatants," they will share that designation with the prisoners in Guantánamo Bay, whom the United States asserts it can hold indefinitely without trial.

QUESTIONS FOR MUKASEY: *During your conversations with Administration officials, did they indicate that you would have the ability to make personnel decisions free from White House interference?* —**Nan Aron**, president, Alliance for Justice

Even before your nomination, but surely in your preparation for this hearing, you would have become aware that the Justice Department under Alberto Gonzales made some decisions in connection with the "war on terror" that have created significant controversy within the department and outside it. Do you disagree with any of these decisions? If so, tell me two or three of them and how you would decide differently. —**Stephen Gillers**, professor of law, New York University

Can you think of any circumstance under which it would be lawful to torture a prisoner in US custody? —**Marjorie Cohn**, president, National Lawyers Guild

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written by Engels). Marx's newspaper writing takes up nearly seven volumes of the fifty-volume *Collected Works of Marx and Engels*—more than *Capital* and indeed more than any of Marx's works published in book form.

The *Tribune* was in some ways a logical place for Marx's journalism. The paper was founded in 1841 by Horace Greeley as a crusading organ of progressive causes with a pronounced American and Christian flavor; one contemporary writer described the paper's political stance as "Anti-Slavery, Anti-War, Anti-Rum, Anti-Tobacco, Anti-Seduction, Anti-Grogshops, Anti-Brothels, Anti-Gambling Houses." During Marx's tenure as a correspondent, the *Tribune* was the largest newspaper in the world, reaching more than 200,000 readers.

At the same time, there was probably no publication in the world that would have been a perfect fit for Marx's cantankerous prose and personality. Even when Marx wrote in English, his strident Germanic tone dominated. His analysis was so unsparingly radical that at times the *Tribune* felt the need to distance itself from its fulminating London correspondent; introducing one of his 1853 essays, for example, the editors wrote, "Mr. Marx has very decided opinions of his own, with some of which we are far from agreeing," but then conceded that "those who do not read his letters neglect one of the most instructive sources of information on the greatest questions of current European politics."

And the ambivalence was mutual—to put it mildly. At times Marx viewed newspaper writing as just one more form of capitalist exploitation. "It's truly nauseating," he wrote to Engels in 1857, "that one should be condemned to count it a blessing when taken aboard by a blotting-paper vendor such as this. To crush up bones, grind them and make them into soup like paupers in the workhouse—that is what the political work to which one is condemned in large measure in a concern like this boils down to." Yet Marx was proud when his work attracted attention. In November 1857, he predicted that the Bank of England would have to be suspended, a prophecy the *New York Times* labeled "simply absurd"; when the bank was suspended in early December, he boasted to Engels about his "gratifying" scoop. Moreover, as some modern Marxist scholars have noted, Marx's

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

The End Game

With only 15 months left in office, President Bush has left whole agencies of the executive branch to be run largely by acting or interim appointees. —*the* New York Times

They're making few appointments now.
This crowd is almost out the door.
The Bushies' clock is winding down.
They've just got time for one more war.

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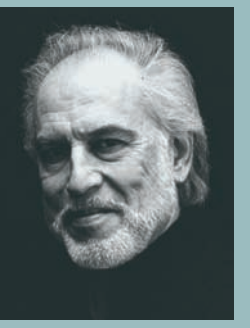
11. At the Edge of Night
12. Guantánamo



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newspaper articles—far from impeding his book-length work—enhanced it by providing him raw material he could then revisit in a fuller context.

Marx's dispatches do not fall into any category that would be familiar to today's reader. He did essentially nothing that could be labeled original reporting, which is hardly surprising; his relations with government authorities were tenuous and the restrictions on his travel were substantial. Instead Marx crafted his dispatches using the same tools he relied on for his books: the materials available to him in the reading room of the British Museum, including history books, government reports and foreign newspapers. He also incorporated private letters sent to him by political allies across Europe. Although he always insisted on placing unfolding events in the context of hundreds of years of history, Marx was diligent about making his newspaper columns as up-to-date as possible. Thus dozens of columns between 1853 and 1856 were essentially battle-by-battle analyses of the unfolding Crimean War. These columns drew extensively on European newspaper dispatches that Marx's American readers could not easily have found themselves, as well as on Engels's formidable knowledge of military history and tactics.

Another category of article involved Marx trying to find the local insurrection that might spark the revolution across Europe he believed to be imminent. Probably no single historical moment shaped his political thinking as much as the events of 1848. Not only did the energy of those revolutions fuel the rhetoric of the *Communist Manifesto*; their eventual crushing by the likes of Louis Napoleon forced Marx to deepen his analysis of state and economic power. Sprinkled throughout his articles are remarkably detailed analyses of later insurrections in Greece, Spain and Italy.

Perhaps Marx's most "Marxist" articles were those dealing with the opium trade in China and India and slavery in America. These were the open sores of imperialism, and Marx railed against them repeatedly and loudly. In his view the British government and the East India Company had deliberately encouraged opium addiction among the Chinese population purely for financial gain. Similarly, the British textile industry depended heavily on American cotton, leading the British ruling classes to repeatedly turn a blind eye to the conditions of slavery in the American South, all the while preaching to the world the virtues of "free trade."

Thus, in a typical 1853 passage about the British role in India, Marx wrote, "The profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilization lies unveiled before our eyes, turning from its home, where it assumes respectable forms, to the colonies, where it goes naked."

While such rhetoric may be predictable, there are constant surprises throughout Marx's newspaper writing. He could be scathingly ironic, as in an 1853 essay attacking the antislavery philanthropy sponsored by the Duchess of Sutherland, whose family, Marx pointed out, systematically forced thousands of Scots from their ancestral homes in the early 1800s. He could render a tale of starvation as persuasively and movingly as any tabloid journalist. And despite the intellectual groundwork that Marx's theories provided for what would later be called state socialism, Marx could be witheringly skeptical of the absurd extension of state power, as in an 1858 essay titled "Project for the Regulation of the Price of Bread in France."

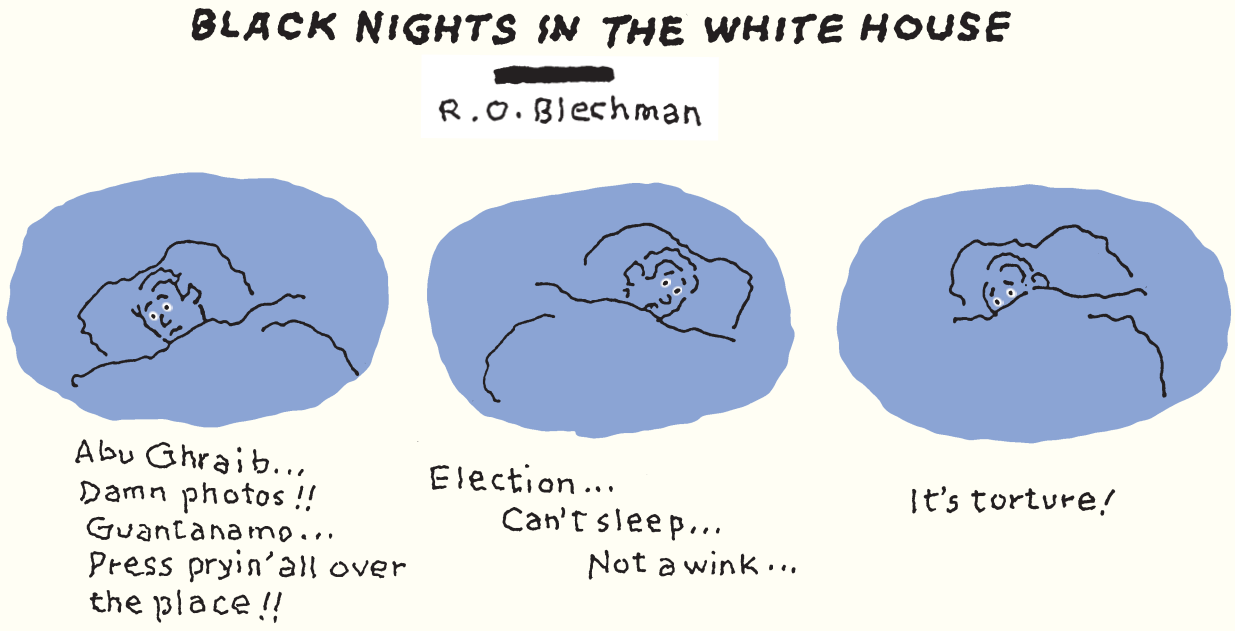
Marx's *Tribune* columns were as sweeping, provocative and challenging as the rest of his writing. While Marx is remembered as a philosopher, economist and political theorist, it is long past time to try to understand him as a journalist.

JAMES LEDBETTER

James Ledbetter, deputy managing editor of CNN Money, *is editor of* Dispatches for the *New York Tribune*: Selected Journalism of Karl Marx *(Penguin Classics).*

Comix Nation

by R.O. BLECHMAN



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Alexander Cockburn

The Real Al Gore

Line up some of the more notorious Nobel Peace Prize recipients, such as Kissinger, and if you had to identify the biggest killer of all it was probably Norman Borlaug, one of the architects of the Green Revolution, which unleashed displacement, malnutrition and death across the Third World. If the Kyoto Accords were ever implemented, and they never will be, the net impact on greenhouse gases—99.72 percent of them natural in origin—would be imperceptible, but the devastation to Third World economies and life expectancies would rival that caused by Borlaug's seed strains.

Already the hysteria about anthropogenic global warming stoked by Al Gore and the Big Lie gang writing the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's press releases has done enormous damage to vital environmental cleanup, sidetracking attention and money from work on sewers, toxic waste sites, filthy smokestacks—not to mention the vast disaster of agricultural pollution. Two other consequences of the hysteria will be deadly. Biofuels will steal the meals of the Third World poor and put them in First World gas tanks. Nuclear power is the hysteria's prime beneficiary. As Peter Montague describes it in our current *CounterPunch* newsletter, "The long-awaited and much-advertised 'nuclear renaissance' actually got under way this fall." NRG Energy, a New Jersey company, applied for a license to build two nuclear power plants in Bay City, Texas—the first formal application for such a license in thirty years.

NRG can confidently await the green light for two reasons. Using the fakery over the supposed effects of man-made greenhouse gases from fossil fuels, the nuclear industry successfully lobbied to pass the 2005 Energy Policy Act, which provides four different kinds of subsidies for atomic power plants. The other shoe promptly dropped with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's sweeping revision of its procedures, drastically attenuating the approval process for new plants. As nuclear plants start to sprout like toadstools across the landscape, it is certainly appropriate to lay a large measure of the blame on Al Gore, who has been a shill for the nuclear industry ever since he came of age as a political harlot for the Oak Ridge Nuclear Laboratory in his home state of Tennessee.

For a Man of Peace, Gore has plenty of blood on his CV. Looking back through the 1980s, we find that on every relevant issue, whether it was supporting the *contras* or Reagan's bombing of Libya in 1986, shilling for the Pentagon's latest weapons systems, voting for nerve gas or backing the Reagan/Bush position on NATO deployments in Europe, Gore's hawkishness was unflagging. In the course of his career he voted for the neutron bomb, the B-2 bomber, the Trident II missile, the MX missile and the Midgetman. He also backed the mini–Star Wars plan. The defense contractors always loved Al, the same way the nuclear plant manufacturers do today.

When it came to Bush Senior's attack on Iraq, Gore's antics astounded even his hardened colleagues in the Senate as they debated the war resolution. Of course he had long since decided to vote aye on war, having been a hardliner on Iraq since 1988. But on January 12, 1991, he spun out his supposed travails in coming to this decision in prime-time posturing, speaking of his "heavy burden of conscience" and the lonely weeks "questioning, probing, searching for the truth." Saddam, he proclaimed, "has more troops than Hitler did in the early years of World War II." In the *New York Times* he wrote, "We can no more look forward to a constructive long-term relationship with Saddam Hussein than we could hope to housebreak a cobra" and that the Iraqi dictator is not "an acceptable part of the landscape."

In Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign Gore was told to earn his keep with constant pummeling of George Bush Senior for having been soft on Saddam. Gore duly crisscrossed the country yoking Saddam and Bush in fervid denunciation. "The cover-up of Bush's arming of Saddam was," Gore shouted, "bigger than Watergate ever was."

In January 1993 Vice President–elect Gore announced that there could never be normal relations with Iraq so long as Saddam remained in power. He reiterated the call for a coup, if not by the Iraqi military then by the CIA. Vice President Gore was then given authority in the Clinton Administration for Iraq policy. In this capacity he presided over the sanctions that led to the death of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, many of them children. The mid-1990s saw Gore as a major voice urging NATO's bombing of the Serbs. In his 2000 presidential campaign he publicly distanced himself from the Clinton Administration on Iraq policy, reiterating that Saddam had to fall and pledging support for Ahmad Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress.

On May 27, 2000, Gore laid out his foreign policy and military strategy in a commencement speech at West Point. It was a neocon manifesto. He said he would pursue a more robust form of Clintonism, highlighted by quicker interventions, less diplomacy and more firepower against the "rogue states… that represent the emerging threat to our country." He called this approach "forward engagement," a phrase redolent of his fellow Peace Prize winner Kissinger's "constructive engagement," which meant backing brutes like Suharto, Somoza and Pinochet.

Gore also denounced George W. Bush's recent call for deep cuts in the US nuclear arsenal, cuts that Bush said the United States should consider making on its own. "Nuclear unilateralism will hinder, rather than help, arms control," Gore said. "Reductions alone don't guarantee stability.… If you're not careful, you could have a reduction of missiles and a more dangerous world."

Spoken like a Peace Prize winner! ■

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Katha Pollitt

With Facts on Our Side

For years feminists and prochoicers have pointed out that women have abortions whether or not the procedure is legal. That was true here before *Roe v. Wade*, and it is true today in countries where abortion is restricted or banned. The difference is that when abortion is legal it is a remarkably safe procedure; when it is illegal, women are injured, women die, children are left motherless. (True, these are already-existing, sinful children, not embryos or fetuses, but still.) This simple public health argument has gotten lost in a thicket of theology, sexual morality, "family values," politics, spin and outright disinformation. The coat hanger has become a political cliché, a relic of the '60s, like the peace sign. Oh, *that* old thing.

Now comes an article in *The Lancet* that shows in cold hard data how right we've been all along. "Induced Abortion: Estimated Rates and Trends Worldwide," a study conducted by the World Health Organization and the Guttmacher Institute, is the first global analysis of abortion incidence since 1995. It finds that rates of abortion (the number of abortions per 1,000 women) are relatively unaffected by whether it is legal. Thus, in South America, where abortion is largely illegal, the rate is 33; in northern America, where it is legal, the rate is 21. "The legal status of abortion doesn't predict whether abortions occur," study coauthor Gilda Sedgh told me by phone. "It predicts whether they are safe. South Africa liberalized its abortion laws in l997, and maternal deaths from unsafe abortion have plummeted by 90 percent." Around the world 48 percent of abortions are unsafe—that's more than 20 million. Some 67,000 women die from unsafe abortions—13 percent of maternal deaths, almost all of them in the developing world, where abortion is mostly restricted or banned. Many times that number are injured or maimed.

The good news is that the global trend is toward legalization: as Susan Cohen reports in the upcoming *Guttmacher Policy Review*, since the Beijing conference on women seventeen countries have liberalized their abortion laws, while three have tightened restrictions (including, most recently, Nicaragua, where abortion is now illegal even to save the woman's life—thank you, Daniel Ortega). The bad news is that, due to population growth, the percentage of abortions that are unsafe has increased since 1995.

The big takeaway from the *Lancet* article is this: there is basically only one thing that lowers the rate of abortion for more than the minute and a half it takes women to figure out how to evade a new legal restriction: contraception. The countries with the lowest abortion rates, like the Netherlands, have few abortion restrictions and lots of birth control. Consider Eastern Europe. Under communism, abortion was virtually the only family planning method. As contraception has become more available, the abortion rate has plummeted—from 90 in 1995 to 44 in 2003. Indeed, Eastern Europe accounts for almost the entire worldwide decline in abortion in the period covered by the study. Meanwhile, for all our *Sturm und Drang*, with women in many states having to jump through more hoops than a circus tiger, the decline in the US abortion rate has been small.

I was curious to know how antichoicers would respond to what certainly seems like a devastating refutation of their position. "Anybody can look at data and pick and choose whatever they want," Jim Sedlak, vice president of the American Life League, told me. "The real fact is that abortion is ending life in the womb and should never be legal." I asked him if he accepted the finding that abortion was more dangerous where it was illegal. No, he said. "When something is illegal, people are more careful." So legal abortion is more unsafe? According to Sedlak, it is indeed.

As for contraception lowering the rate of abortion, that's an illusion: contraception *is* abortion. "Most methods of birth control kill babies in the womb by preventing implantation," said Sedlak, who'd like to see the pill, the IUD and most other methods outlawed. The American Life League, although not an official Catholic organization, explicitly follows Catholic teaching—unlike most Catholics, as Sedlak admitted. But so far as I know (and Sedlak agreed with me here) there is no antichoice organization that endorses contraception. Not one. Even Democrats for Life of America has refused to support Congressional legislation expanding funding for contraception. "Between Title X and Medicaid, the government has made a tremendous investment in contraception," DLA executive director Kristen Day told me. Actually, the government has done the opposite. Title X, which funds contraception for low-income women, has 61 percent less money in real terms than it had in 1980, to serve a much larger population. Had funding merely kept pace with inflation, it would be more than $725 million, instead of $283 million. As for Medicaid, skewed eligibility rules actually deny contraceptive benefits to many poor women who qualify for pregnancy care.

In the past few months, due to a technicality in the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act, the price of contraception in campus clinics has skyrocketed, from around $15 for a pack of pills to more than $50. Some college health centers have simply stopped offering the pill. When you consider that 3 million college women take the pill—38 percent of female students—you can see the disaster in the making. That won't bother the new head of the HHS Office of Family Planning, Susan Orr, a longtime opponent of birth control formerly with the Family Research Council. "We're quite pleased, because fertility is not a disease," Orr told the *Washington Post* in 2001, praising a Bush proposal to stop mandating contraceptive coverage in federal employees' health plans.

Between facts and theology, antichoicers choose the latter every time. ■

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Toxic Toys: Why Europe's Children Are Safer Than Ours

by MARK SCHAPIRO

Into the playrooms of children has come the unsettling news: those little red trains and other neat miniatures of the adult world may be coated in paint containing illegally high levels of lead, posing myriad risks to a child's neurological development. After that discovery prompted a mass recall this past summer, parents will never look at Thomas the Tank Engine the same way again. But the uproar over banned substances and rogue Chinese toy manufacturers has overshadowed an even more troubling issue: the toxins in toys that are perfectly legal. The United States remains one of the few developed countries to permit the import of plastic toys made with polyvinyl chloride additives called phthalates (pronounced tha-lates), which help make toys soft and pliable enough to be twisted or sucked yet durable enough to survive a 1-year-old's grip. A mounting body of scientific evidence suggests that phthalates impede the production of testosterone and disrupt the sexual development of infant boys.

That disturbing claim certainly caught my attention as I sat in a hearing room in the California Capitol January 10, 2006, and watched two of America's leading experts on the physiological effects of chemical exposure testify before the health committee of the State Assembly. Such hearings are normally dry affairs, but the scientists' allegations that children were gnawing and sucking on toy animals and other doodads that decrease production of the male sexual hormone gave the testimony a certain urgency. The experts had been called in by Democratic Assemblywoman Wilma Chan, author of a bill to ban phthalates from children's toys; the bill had been met by powerful opposition from the toy and plastics industries.

In the average home, phthalates are everywhere—in shower curtains, shampoo bottles, raincoats and perfumes (to aid adherence to the skin). In hospitals, they're in medical tubing. A component of that distinct "new car smell" comes from phthalates in the plastic dashboard. The dash becomes more brittle as the car ages because phthalates are slowly migrating into the car's interior. As they sweat out of the plastic, residue enters the air or, through direct contact, the skin.

For infants, the most vulnerable population, exposure takes

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multiple routes: phthalates enter the womb through the umbilical cord or later through mother's breast milk. Exposure can come from dust in the air, from plasticized wall coverings or flooring and from decaying resins in plastic containers. It can also come from sucking on plastic toys. Plastic rubber duckies floating in many American bathtubs are squishy because of phthalates. Infants, according to the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, an affiliate of the World Health Organization, have far less capacity for detoxifying chemicals than do adults, and with toys they face all three points of a "risk triangle": "increased vulnerability" to a chemical's "toxic effects" and plenty of possibilities for exposure through "intimate contact."

Chan's bill also proposed a toy ban on Bisphenol A, but most of the scientists' attention that day was focused on a phthalate called Di(2-ethylhexyl) Phthalate, or DEHP, which when ingested can impede the production of LH, a hormone responsible for triggering cells in the testes to produce testosterone. In a baby boy, testosterone plays a major role in determining everything from gender-based behavior to sex drive to what his sperm count will be twenty years later.

Declining sperm counts and the rising incidence of conditions like testes cancer are the possible outcome of early phthalate exposure.

Dr. Earl Gray, who has been studying the effect of endocrine-disrupting chemicals on rodents for seventeen years at the EPA's research facility in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, told the panel that sexual malformations may follow from below-normal LH and testosterone levels. Dr. Gray has found that rats fed phthalates during pregnancy gave birth to a high rate of male pups with incompletely descended testes and a rare condition known as hypospadias—an opening in the penis elsewhere than on the tip. Both are symptoms of low testosterone. Scientists, Dr. Gray said, were calling these deformities "phthalate syndrome," and they are increasingly concerned about a parallel syndrome in human infants. Declining sperm counts among US men and the rising incidence of conditions like hypospadias and testes cancer, Dr. Gray explained, are the possible outcome of early phthalate exposure. "The research," he said, "suggests more and more concern about phthalates."

Also testifying that day was Dr. Shanna Swan, director of the Center for Reproductive Epidemiology at the University of Rochester School of Medicine, in New York. Dr. Swan conducted a study, published in the June 2005 *Environmental Health Perspectives*, that sent shock waves through the medical community. Swan took urine samples from 134 pregnant women in Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Columbia, Missouri, and tested them for phthalates. The results showed an apparent correlation between women who had higher phthalate levels in their urine and the fact that their male children, within thirteen months of birth, showed "reduced ano-genital distance (AGD)." That measurement of the distance between the anus and the scrotum is a means of distinguishing between male and female rodents and is a key indicator of testosterone levels. Dr. Gray has been seeing shorter AGDs in rats fed phthalates—now Dr. Swan was seeing it in humans.

Dr. Swan summarized this in layman's terms for the committee: "Wherever we've looked," she said, "human studies are consistent with rodent studies. Phthalates are making the ano-genital distance shorter, in a more feminine direction."

That was pretty strong language from two of America's most eminent specialists on the developing endocrine system. But representatives of the chemical and toy industries were also invited to testify. Dr. James Lamb, a former EPA reproductive biologist now working for the Weinberg Group, a consulting firm that lobbies on behalf of the chemical industry, asserted that the effects seen in animals from phthalate exposure were from quantities placed in their feed that far exceeded the amounts children would absorb from playing with or sucking on toys. "Phthalate syndrome," he said, "is a rat syndrome, not a human syndrome."

Joan Lawrence, vice president for standards and regulatory affairs of the Toy Industry Association (TIA), assured the panel, "If there was solid scientific evidence that these products were harmful, the toy industry would be the first to remove them." Lawrence and Lamb asked, Had scientists established a link between phthalates and sexual malformation beyond a shadow of a doubt? The answer, Gray and Swan conceded, was no. The links between infant phthalate exposure and the symptoms of endocrine disruption are highly suggestive, they said, but have yet to be definitively proven.

None of the advocates of Chan's proposed ban argued that the amount of phthalates to which an infant would be exposed by toys alone would be enough to trigger the spiral of dysfunction prompted by lower levels of testosterone. Nor could they say absolutely that phthalates were the cause of the troubles they were seeing. But removing phthalates from toys, the scientists told the panel, would make for one less contaminant amid multiple exposures to phthalates and other chemicals that are possible contributors to rising endocrine-related troubles, and sexual dysfunction levels, in American men.

That logic, in fact, had led the European Union to ban phthalates eight years before. The very different ways the battle over phthalates has unfolded in Europe and America reflect the vastly different approaches taken by the EU and US governments to protecting citizens from chemical hazards. Here, concern about a product's safety is not enough to justify regulation; irrefutable evidence of harmful effects—a scientific standard that is elusive at best—is required, as is a cost-benefit analysis weighing the "benefits" to society against the "costs" to industry of making the change. The EU, in marked contrast, operates according to the "precautionary principle." As Robert Donkers, who served as the EU's environment counselor in Washington until September, explained to me, "Unlike in the United States, we don't wait until we have 100 percent proof. Rather, if there's fear, scientific suspicions that [a chemical] could cause irrevers-

Mark Schapiro, a frequent Nation *contributor, is editorial director of the Center for Investigative Reporting. This article was adapted from* Exposed: The Toxic Chemistry of Everyday Products and What's at Stake for American Power *(just published by Chelsea Green).*

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"Let us pay taxes!"

That's the rallying cry of a group of West Coast cannabis growers, and their raw numbers suggest it's time for us to pay attention.

According to California law enforcers, seizures of the marijuana crop in 2006 hit a record street value of $7 billion. But experts say they probably got only a tenth of the crop. If that's true, it puts the total value at $70 billion.

$70 billion in sales revenue...and the state doesn't get a cent!

Now comes an ad hoc committee of growers who propose to regulate, control and tax the weed – virtually wiping out the state's structural budget deficit.

Sales taxes alone would bring in $5.77 billion. And the income taxes paid by newly taxable entrepreneurs should generate another $7 billion or so for state and local coffers.

Nationally, the federal government's take might be as much as $60 billion a year, and that's not counting the tens of billions being wasted on marijuana prohibition.

Or should we keep sending this cash windfall to criminals and their cartels?

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ible damage in the future, we don't want to wait. By the time it's proven, it could be much too late." This was the perspective of Assemblywoman Chan and the advocates of her bill; the risks of doing nothing, they argued, were far greater than the risks of doing something. But that argument would not immediately hold sway in Sacramento. After heavy lobbying by the industry, Chan's bill was defeated by one vote.

In the decade before the EU passed its ban in 1999, numerous studies on phthalates' effects on humans were published in European scientific journals. In the Netherlands, scientists asked men to chew on pieces of plastic children's toys, then tested their saliva and blood to see how easily phthalates pass into the human body; in Denmark scientists concluded that high levels of phthalates in breast milk contributed to lower levels of testosterone in male offspring in their first three months of life; and in Italy, doctors reported that phthalates could contribute to premature births. In 1998 the European Chemical Bureau, an arm of the European Commission that reviews research on chemical toxicity, affirmed that phthalates easily slough off products like plastic toys and recommended tighter exposure standards. Across Europe, parents expressed alarm: if these are really such powerful endocrine disrupters as scientists are suggesting, what are they doing in my son's crib? (Most concern, of course, has been focused on infant boys because of the concern about testosterone levels.)

In China, where most manufacturing takes place, toys are produced with phthalates for the US market and without them for the EU market.

Responding to mounting public fears, the EU issued a temporary ban in 1999 on the inclusion of six phthalates in children's "toys and teethers intended to be mouthed by children under three years of age." The ban was renewed yearly as scientists were encouraged to get to the heart of these concerns. The World Wildlife Fund took blood samples from members of the European Parliament in 2004 and detected DEHP in all thirty-nine of the MEPs tested. A year later the Parliament voted overwhelmingly to make the temporary ban permanent.

As of January three phthalates determined to be toxic to the reproductive system—DEHP and two others, DBP and BBP—were banned from "all toys and childcare articles." Three others deemed less dangerous—DINP, DIDP, and DNOP—are banned from toys, "if those articles can be put into the mouth by children." The bans are in place until 2010, when they will be put up for review or renewal depending on the results of research. Some EU countries, like Austria and Germany, imposed even tighter restrictions on phthalates, limiting their use in plastic food wrapping.

Many other countries are following the Europeans' lead—including Japan, Norway, Argentina and Mexico, which have banned DEHP and other phthalates from most infant toys, and others, like Canada, which have banned them in teethers and rattles. That leaves the United States as one of the few developed countries with no government limits on phthalates in toys aimed at young children.

What has been the effect of removing toys with phthalates from European playrooms? The shift in production practices failed to trigger the dire economic consequences the toy industry predicted during its annual negotiations with the EU. From 2002 to '04, European toy-industry sales grew by 5 percent, to nearly $20 billion annually, according to the trade group Toy Industries of Europe. Responding to the ban, European industry began developing alternatives.

A Danish company, Danisco, one of the world's largest manufacturers of food additives, introduced a phthalate alternative for toys and other products that has been approved for use in Europe and the United States. In January 2006, the European Council for Plasticisers and Intermediates participated in a conference, "Plasticisers 2006," tailored to encourage the industry to develop phthalate alternatives in response to "increasingly stringent" legislative demands and "environmental awareness among the general population." On the other side of the Atlantic, however, the US plastics industry, represented by the Vinyl Institute and the American Chemical Council, is continuing to fight legislative measures like the one proposed in California.

German chemical giant BASF shut down its European DEHP production after the EU ban in 2005. The company was formerly responsible for half the phthalate produced in Europe but "discontinued production of DEHP [in Europe] because the market has changed considerably over the last years," according to William Pagano, a BASF communications officer who responded to my questions via e-mail. Instead, BASF has a new and profitable plasticizer line called DINCH. Pagano said the company has spent "five million euros…for rigorous and extensive" safety testing of DINCH and that it has an "outstanding toxicological profile" for "sensitive applications…such as toys, food-contact materials, and medical applications." In the United States, however, the company continues to manufacture DEHP at two facilities, in Pittsburgh and Texas City, for many industrial and consumer uses on the US market. Likewise, in China, where most toy manufacturing takes place, toys are produced with phthalates for the US market but without them for the European market. Unlike in the recent scandals about lead paint in Thomas the Tank Engine toys, when Chinese companies ship phthalate-laden toys to America, they are simply abiding by US rules.

In Brussels several months before the California debate, I interviewed David Cadogan, a chemist who works as the senior scientist for the Confederation of European Chemical Industries, Europe's chemical-industry trade group. Before coming to the group, Cadogan spent two decades in the private sector, specializing in the manufacture of plastics, including many phthalates. Now, as a representative of his industry, he'd lobbied the EP against the phthalate ban. He's no fan of the precautionary principle. The EU's decision, Dr. Cadogan told me, was prompted by "politicians' desire to appear to be protecting their constituents from scientifically unproven risks." But he conceded that since the ban had taken effect, it's had

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little impact on European toy makers. "I suppose," he shrugged, "we've learned to live without [phthalates]."

Back in the States, Dr. Swan told me that what disturbs her most about the ongoing debate over phthalates in America is that substitutes are working. "We can switch. It's doable. Why put this into kids' bodies if we don't have to?"

Ironically, the EU's decision on phthalates was largely based on evidence generated by US scientists, much of it funded by their government. Dr. Gray, for example, works for the EPA. The EPA has also funded many other US scientists' research on phthalates, including that of Dr. Swan at the University of Rochester. The work of Swan, Gray and several other scientists at public research institutions across the country contributed to the EU's risk assessments of phthalates. Gray's and Swan's findings, along with those of European scientists, were an important part of the evidence used to support the EU's decision to limit infants' phthalate exposure.

The same data, however, have had an entirely different reception in the United States. The California hearing was the first of its kind in the country. Dr. Gray and Dr. Swan told me they had never presented their findings on phthalates to any US legislative body, on either the federal or state level. "Nobody's ever asked," said Dr. Swan.

Jurisdiction over phthalates in the United States is scattered: the EPA has responsibility for phthalates released into the environment; the FDA, for medical devices like IV tubes; the National Institutes of Occupational Safety and Health, for workplace exposure (there appear to be higher pancreatic cancer rates among phthalate workers). In each, US policy-makers are confronted with a powerful industry lobby that has largely succeeded in shaping a regulatory culture that imposes an obstacle course of cost-benefit analyses before acting.

"If you're a US regulator, it's hard to resist the culture of analysis paralysis," says Joel Tickner, a toxicologist at the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at UMass. "The more we think we don't know, the less the imperative to act."

The one body with jurisdiction over toys is the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC). That government agency has been cut to 100 inspectors to monitor some 15,000 products—including those lead-painted toys from China.

In 1998 a petition was submitted to the commission by a coalition of environmental health groups—including National Environmental Trust, the Science and Environmental Health Network and Greenpeace—demanding a ban on polyvinyl chloride, which contains phthalates, in children's toys. The CPSC went on to review toxicity studies of DINP, a phthalate that's similar to DEHP, and then in 2003 conducted a study of children's interactions with plastic toys. The CPSC's Human Relevance Working Group, the team charged with assessing people's interactions with potentially dangerous products, installed cameras to monitor the "mouthing behavior" of 169 children in Houston and Chicago for two days. Another 491 children were observed by their parents, who took notes on their behavior. The frequency with which the children (55 percent boys, 45 percent girls) mouthed soft plastic toys spread liberally around them was registered and timed. This research,

Rivers, ponds, lakes and streams - they all have different names, but they all contain water. Just as religions do - they all contain truths.

- Muhammad Ali

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commonly called the Kids Suck study, showed that the average 1-year-old or younger spends seventy minutes a day sucking on plastic; forty-eight minutes for children between 1 and 2; thirty-seven minutes for children between 2 and 3—not enough time sucking, CPSC concluded, to deliver a "designated health risk" to children under 5.

"The dose makes the poison," CPSC spokesman Scott Wolfson explained to me. "There were not enough phthalates released in those toys to pose any danger." Wolfson's comment revealed another key difference between European and American approaches to regulating chemical exposure. For phthalates, the United States looked at the time children may be exposed and determined it was not long enough for concern. The Europeans looked at phthalates' toxicity and decided to limit a potential route of exposure: toys.

Industry giants Mattel and Hasbro lobbied strenuously against EU regulation of phthalates. But when their campaign failed, both companies, which have significant European sales, announced they would abide by the European standards and remove phthalates from their worldwide production of young children's toys. Company members of the TIA, Joan Lawrence told me, agreed "voluntarily" to take DEHP and other phthalates out of rattles, pacifiers and teethers, products "intended to be used in the mouth." That agreement was announced in the 1980s, after concerns surfaced over phthalates' potential carcinogenicity. It did not, however, cover toys. The result can be seen in the playrooms of American children.

Environment California and the Public Interest Research Group teamed up to conduct chemical analyses of infant playthings, an exercise never performed by the US government. They bought teethers, bath books and toys and sent them to an EPA-certified chemical lab in Chicago for a breakdown. Fifteen of the eighteen products tested contained one or another of the six phthalates banned in the EU. A dozen infant products—including waterproof books and bath toys—contained measurable levels of DEHP. Nine of those contained multiple phthalates that toy makers have in the past decade said they would voluntarily remove. One teether—the Teething Ring, which induces infants to suck on it to get an oral-pain-relief gel—contained DEHP. Another, the Baby Gund Jungle Collection Teether, contained DBP, a phthalate classified by the EU as a reproductive toxin and carcinogen. Today, an American who wants phthalate-free toys can find them in the brands manufactured by multinationals. Those companies, according to Lawrence, account for about 40 percent of the US market. But for those who buy at discount stores or buy generic brands online—outlets that sell millions of baby products a year—if they're plastic and soft there's a good chance they contain phthalates.

Chan's bill in California was modeled explicitly on Europe's law; it was, commented Peter Price, a lobbyist for the bill, "the EU directive coming to Sacramento." The arguments were the same as had been pushed in Europe, and the key players were the same, too: Hasbro and Mattel had acceded to the demands of the EU in Europe, but as the largest members of the trade group were a part of the lobbying campaign launched to kill the effort to impose those same restrictions in California. The same held for the Weinberg Group—whose Brussels-based representatives had been the leading voice of US industry opposition to the EU's phthalate initiatives and which would now send James Lamb to represent them in Sacramento.

After Chan's bill went down, San Francisco took up her idea; it passed an ordinance prohibiting the sale of toys and childcare articles containing phthalates likely to go into children's mouths from being sold within the city limits. That made San Francisco the first government in the country to limit children's exposure to phthalates. The sellers of toys containing the same six phthalates singled out by the EU would be subject to fines that could go to thousands of dollars. Shortly before the bill took effect, the *San Francisco Chronicle* tested samples of randomly purchased toys and discovered that at least three out of sixteen exceeded the city's new phthalate limits. Those included a teether, a doll and a rubber ducky sold at the drugstore chain Walgreens; the toys had thirteen times the allowable level of DEHP. The response of industry was not to remove toys from the market but to file a lawsuit: the TIA, along with the American Chemistry Council, the Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association, retail industry groups and local toy stores, sued to block the implementation of the ordinance on the grounds that on such matters city law is pre-empted by state law. That challenge is pending.

'We can switch. It's doable. Why put this into kids' bodies if we don't have to?'
—Dr. Shanna Swan, research scientist

Wilma Chan was ultimately termed out, but her idea had better luck this year. In September the Assembly passed a similar bill, sponsored by Assemblywoman Fiona Ma of San Francisco, banning the use of phthalates in toys aimed at children under 3. Advocates mounted a poignant public campaign, featuring the distribution of 1,000 phthalate-free rubber duckies on the day of the vote; a rally in Los Angeles featuring Harvey Karp, a well-regarded pediatrician; and a novel initiative led by teenage girls, affiliated with Teens for Safe Cosmetics, who called friends around the state to pressure their legislators by telling them that within a year they would be voters. "It was one of those rare examples of 17-year-old girls being charitable to the generations behind them," commented Rachel Gibson, staff attorney at Environment California. On October 14, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Ma's bill. When it goes into effect next year, Californians will be the only Americans who can shop knowing their toys contain no phthalates.

Meanwhile, phthalates in toys continues to be an issue in Europe. Since the EU's ban two years ago, there have been almost monthly confiscations of toys that violate the phthalate restrictions. Last July customs authorities in Lithuania ordered an immediate withdrawal from the market of plastic hippopotamuses and dolphins from China because of their DEHP levels; the month before, they had confiscated a shipment of soft plastic toy snakes. There is nothing, of course, to prevent those toxic toy animals from coming into the United States. ■

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Hillary's Mystery Money Men

Harken chairman Alan Quasha helped make Bush. Now what does he want from Clinton?

by RUSS BAKER AND ADAM FEDERMAN

In the Clintons' pursuit of power, there is no such thing as a strange bedfellow. One recently exposed *inamorata* was Norman Hsu, the mysterious businessman from Hong Kong who brought in $850,000 to Hillary Clinton's campaign before being unmasked as a fugitive. Her campaign dismissed Hsu as someone who'd slipped through the cracks of an otherwise unimpeachable system for vetting donors, and perhaps he was. The same cannot be said for the notorious financier Alan Quasha, whose involvement with Clinton is at least as substantial—and still under wraps.

Political junkies will recall Quasha as the controversial figure who bailed out George W. Bush's failing oil company in 1986, folding Bush into his company, Harken Energy, thus setting him on the path to a lucrative and high-profile position as an owner of the Texas Rangers baseball team, and the presidency. The persistently unprofitable Harken—many of whose board members, connected to powerful foreign interests and the intelligence community, nevertheless profited enormously—faced intense scrutiny in the early 1990s and again during Bush's first term.

Now Quasha is back—on the other side of the aisle. Operating below the radar, he entered Hillary Clinton's circle even before she declared her candidacy by quietly hiring Clinton confidant and longtime Democratic Party money man Terry McAuliffe at one of his companies. During the interregnum between McAuliffe's chairmanship of the Democratic Party and the time he officially joined Clinton's campaign, Quasha set McAuliffe up with a salary and opened a Washington office for him.

Just a few years earlier, McAuliffe had publicly criticized Bush for his financial dealings with Harken, disparaging the company's Enron-like accounting. Yet in 2005 McAuliffe accepted this cushy perch with Quasha's newly acquired investment firm, Carret Asset Management, and even brought along former Clinton White House business liaison Peter O'Keefe, who had been his senior aide at the Democratic National Committee. McAuliffe remained with the company until he became national chair of Hillary's presidential bid, and O'Keefe never left. McAuliffe's connection to Quasha has, until now, never been noted.

Another strong link between Quasha and Clinton is Quasha's business partner, Hassan Nemazee, a top Hillary fundraiser who was trotted out to defend her during the Hsu episode—in which the clothing manufacturer was unmasked as a swindler who seemingly funneled illegal contributions through "donors" of modest means.

Russ Baker and Adam Federman are, respectively, founder and research associate of the Real News Project (www.realnews.org). They may be reached at contact@realnews.org. *Research support was provided by the Investigative Fund of The Nation Institute.*

PHOTOMONTAGE BY STEPHEN KLING/AVENGING ANGELS; PHOTOS: GETTY

In June, by liquidating a blind trust, the Clintons sought to distance themselves from any financial entanglements that might embarrass the campaign. Clinton spokesman Howard Wolfson argued that the couple had gone "above and beyond" what was legally required "in order to avoid even the hint of a conflict of interest." But throughout their political careers, Bill and Hillary Clinton have repeatedly associated with people whose objectives seemed a million miles from "a place called Hope." Among these Alan Quasha and his menagerie—including Saudi frontmen, a foreign dictator, figures with intelligence ties and a maze of companies and offshore funds—stand out.

"That Hillary Clinton's campaign is involved with this particular cast of characters should give people pause," says John Moscow, a former Manhattan prosecutor. In the late 1980s and early '90s he led the investigation of the corrupt Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) global financial empire—a bank whose prominent shareholders included members of the Harken board. "Too many of the same names from earlier troubling circumstances suggests a lack of control over who she is dealing with," says Moscow, "or a policy of dealing with anyone who can pay."

Ideology does not seem to be the principal issue driving either Quasha or Nemazee. Nemazee backed the likes of arch-conservative Republican senators Jesse Helms, Sam Brownback and Al D'Amato before moving aggressively into the Democratic camp. Quasha, frequently identified as a Republican fundraiser, gave to both Bush and Al Gore in 2000 and so far in the 2008 race has given to Republicans Mitt Romney and Rudy Giuliani as well as Democrats Barack Obama and Chris Dodd, in addition to Hillary Clinton. But Quasha's concerted efforts to get into Clinton's inner circle are reminiscent of his relationship with a pre–Governor Bush.

A student at Harvard's business school at the same time as Bush, Quasha was a little-known New York lawyer when he took over the small Abilene-based Harken Oil in 1983, using millions from offshore accounts held in the name of family

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members. Quasha's now-deceased father, Manila-based attorney William Quasha, was known for his close friendship with Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos and his ties to US intelligence; he was also a member of the "Eagles Club" of major GOP contributors.

In 1986 Alan Quasha embraced a struggling George W. Bush, rescuing his failing Spectrum 7 oil company, folding it into Harken Energy and providing Bush with a directorship, more than $600,000 in stock and options and a consulting contract initially valued at $80,000 a year (which was raised in 1989 to $120,000). The financial setup allowed Bush to devote most of his time to the presidential campaign of his father, a former CIA director who as Vice President was the Reagan Administration's overseer of a massive outsourcing of covert intelligence operations, and who had his own warm relationship with Marcos.

Harken's financials were famously complicated. Reporters from top publications like the *Wall Street Journal*, *Time* and *Fortune* went at Harken with zest, but they ultimately failed to unravel all its labyrinthine activities. In 2003 Harken was described in the trade publication *Platt's Energy Economist* as "a toxic waste dump for bad deals, with a strong odor of US intelligence spookery and chicanery about it." Indeed, the company was kept afloat by an all-star cast of financiers with ties to BCCI, Saudi intelligence, the South African apartheid regime, Marcos and the Shah of Iran. The company perennially lost money for ordinary investors while benefiting insiders like Bush, Quasha and Nemazee. Indeed, Harken has lost money nearly every year since Bush's days there, piling up cumulative losses in the hundreds of millions.

Nevertheless, in 1990, when the *Dallas Times Herald* ranked Harken fifth on its list of worst-performing local firms, the tiny oil refiner beat out the giant exploration company Amoco for an offshore drilling contract in Bahrain that was potentially worth billions. As George W. Bush biographer Bill Minutaglio wrote, "Oil analysts were stunned that bottom-feeding Harken…could hook such a meaty international contract… not only hadn't Harken drilled overseas, it had never drilled in water. Speculation immediately surged that it was because Bahrain wanted to do business with the son of the U.S. president."

Bush appeared to benefit from insider trading when he sold two-thirds of his stock in Harken at a peak price after the Bahrain deal—and just before news emerged that the company had failed to find oil and its share price plummeted. He also failed to report his sale of company stock on time, leading many to believe that he had something to hide. Immediately after a 1991 *Wall Street Journal* article detailing Bush's involvement with Harken, the SEC launched an investigation, but unsurprisingly, with George H.W. Bush in the White House, it came to nothing. The *Journal* article speculated that there was more to the picture:

> What does emerge is a complex pattern of personal and financial relationships behind Harken's sudden good fortune in the Middle East, raising the question of whether Bahrainis or others in the Middle East may have hoped to ingratiate themselves with the White House. Even more intriguing, there are numerous links among Harken, Bahrain and individuals close to the discredited Bank of Credit & Commerce International, a banking empire that used Mideast oil money to seek ties to political leaders in several countries.

Thanks to his income from Harken, Bush was able to become managing partner of the Texas Rangers—a glamorous and highly visible sinecure that would eventually earn him nearly $15 million and make him a credible front-runner for the Texas governorship. This rescue and makeover of a ne'er-do-well son was a key step in W.'s path to political power.

Quasha's Clinton play began in 2003, when he bought Carret Asset Management, a once-revered private equity investment firm that manages nearly $2 billion in assets. Its founder, Philip Carret, a Wall Street legend and hero of Warren Buffett, died in 1998; the firm was sold twice before Quasha bought it for a song. Some were troubled when they learned the identity of the new owner. "I was horrified that he was going to hide behind my family's name," says Renee Carret, a longtime executive at the firm whose grandfather started the company in 1963. When Quasha took over, she resigned. "I just personally didn't want to be affiliated with him. There were too many questions that were left unanswered."

Quasha entered Hillary's circle by hiring Clinton confidant and longtime Democratic Party money man Terry McAuliffe at one of his companies.

As his co-chair in the private firm, Quasha chose his old friend Nemazee, a fellow Harken investor. By the time of the Carret acquisition, Nemazee, a founding member of the Iranian-American Political Action Committee whose family was close with the late Shah of Iran, had become a significant fundraiser for the Clintons and the Democratic Party. In 1995 he raised money for the DNC. In 1998, in the midst of the Lewinsky affair, Nemazee collected $60,000 for Bill Clinton's legal defense fund in $10,000 increments from relatives and friends. Clinton subsequently nominated Nemazee as ambassador to Argentina but withdrew the nomination after an article in *Forbes* raised questions about Nemazee's business dealings in the 1980s and '90s—which noted that the American-born Nemazee magically became "Hispanic" by acquiring Venezuelan citizenship because of a requirement that certain California public pension funds be run by minorities.

Failure to be named ambassador did not, however, hamper Nemazee's rise within the Democratic Party. By 2004 he was New York finance chair for John Kerry's campaign, and in 2006 he served under Senator Chuck Schumer as the national finance chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC)—a period during which the committee raised about $25 million more than its Republican counterpart. This past

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By John Fleming

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February Nemazee, at the behest of McAuliffe, threw a dinner for Hillary at Manhattan's swank Cipriani restaurant, which featured Bill Clinton and raised more than $500,000.

The exact nature of McAuliffe's duties at Carret is unclear, and Quasha, Carret and McAuliffe all declined to answer *The Nation*'s questions on this matter. But McAuliffe seems to have served, at least occasionally, as a good will ambassador for Quasha's business operations. He brought Wang Tianyi, head of a formerly state-owned Chinese firm and a business associate of Quasha's, to meet with Bill Clinton. And Quasha has visited the ex-President at his Harlem office over the past several years, according to Joe Wozny, former president of a Carret affiliate. Wozny recalls that Quasha "was up there quite a few times, meeting with Bill Clinton." As for that Washington office, the Carret website says only that it specialized in providing "information regarding products and services for institutions."

But the office seems to have benefited McAuliffe—and Hillary Clinton. When McAuliffe stepped down as DNC chair in February 2005, he said he planned to hit the lecture circuit and spend more time with his family. He may have done both, but he did so as vice chair of Carret from the new company office on the seventh floor of the venerable McPherson Building, once the home of the John Kerry campaign and just off K Street's lobbyist gulch. Simon Rosenberg's New Democrat Network, where Mark Penn, chief pollster and strategist for Hillary's campaign, has served as a fellow, was housed next door to McAuliffe and O'Keefe.

'That Hillary Clinton's campaign is involved with this cast of characters should give people pause.' —former prosecutor John Moscow

While there, McAuliffe found time to pen his memoir, *What a Party!*, his paean to the Clintons and his role in raising record amounts of money for them and the party. Yet the memoir itself, for which he earned a seven-figure advance, makes no mention of Carret or his role as its vice chair.

Three people working in nearby suites said they remembered McAuliffe and O'Keefe working out of the office, but none of them remembered the Carret name. Nor did any of them have any idea what McAuliffe was doing as Quasha's vice chair. One person who visited McAuliffe in the suite recalled that he was working on his book but said he was unaware of the official function of the office. "Terry holds his cards pretty close on his business activities," he said.

According to another visitor, McAuliffe was using his time to lay the groundwork for Hillary's long-anticipated presidential bid. With McAuliffe leading Clinton's ravenous fundraising operation, the possibility that Carret's Washington office was opened up, at least in part, to serve just such a function is bolstered by the fact that Carret opened the office only after hiring McAuliffe—and closed it down once he left. During that period, though no Clinton campaign committee yet existed, there were signs that he was already operating on her behalf. In 2005 he appeared on CNN's *Crossfire*, where the former Democratic chief did not bother to feign neutrality in the primaries: "Personally, I hope she runs," he said. "We would be lucky if she did run, I'll tell you that." In 2006 he kept one foot in Clintondom as a member of the Clinton Global Initiative, an organization whose membership is primarily by invitation to elite business leaders. Wang, whose China International Industry and Commerce partnered with Carret soon after McAuliffe joined the company, was also named to the initiative in 2006.

Meanwhile, during McAuliffe's employment at Carret, Quasha himself donated large sums to the DSCC. He gave $26,700 in June 2006 and $25,000 that October and also personally contributed $4,600, the maximum allowed, to the Hillary Clinton presidential exploratory committee.

Since his start as a young fundraiser on Carter's 1980 reelection campaign, McAuliffe has consistently melded politics, policy and private enterprise. By the time he was 30, he had launched a dozen companies, his own law firm and numerous venture capital companies. Perhaps his most controversial association was with the telecommunications company Global Crossing, where McAuliffe managed to turn a $100,000 personal investment into an $18 million windfall. After McAuliffe sold his shares and got out, the company collapsed; nearly 10,000 employees lost their jobs, and investors lost $54 billion. McAuliffe defended the firm's top executives, who were close with both the Bushes and Clintons, but went on to attack President Bush for similar patterns at Harken.

At a DNC meeting in Las Vegas in 2002, McAuliffe spoke about the recent collapse of Enron and questioned whether Bush could "restore confidence to Wall Street when he has engaged in the same practices he condemns today," a reference to Bush's Harken profiteering. That same year, associates of McAuliffe, fronted by a fake grassroots organization, released an aggressive ad campaign seeking to highlight the Harken-Bush connection.

It is not surprising, then, to learn that neither McAuliffe's connection to Carret nor Quasha's role in the firm have been widely publicized. Carret employees said they were surprised that when Quasha acquired the prestigious firm he did not choose to publicize his coup, instead keeping it quiet. In fact, the company's website does not reveal his role as chair—or much of anything about the firm. The company's chief financial officer, Marco Vega, said he was unable to provide details on Quasha's role in the company, or even to confirm his current title.

The silence is deafening. Repeated requests for interviews on this topic were ignored or rebuffed by the offices of Hillary Clinton's campaign, Bill Clinton, Alan Quasha, Hassan Nemazee, Terry McAuliffe and Peter O'Keefe. McAuliffe's spokeswoman, Tracy Sefl, who works for the Clinton-connected communications firm the Glover Park Group but represents McAuliffe informally, said that McAuliffe would not grant an interview or respond to detailed e-mailed questions on these matters. Sefl minimized McAuliffe's involvement with the company, claiming he was only "an adviser to Carret—as he was to many other companies."

But a vice chair is much more than just an adviser, and

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About Your Professor

Professor Amy-Jill Levine (Ph.D., Duke University) is E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, where she also holds the position of Director of the Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality. She is a prodigious scholar, author, and lecturer.

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Carret's opening an office off K Street was not a casual gesture. Notably, though the DC office was closed after McAuliffe left for Hillary's campaign, McAuliffe protégé O'Keefe has stayed on as Carret's managing director for marketing—providing Quasha with an ongoing pipeline to the Clinton operation.

With an international man of mystery like Quasha, it's nigh impossible to definitively identify his endgame. But one thing he seems to have a stake in is free rein for hedge funds—and preservation of the low rate at which their profits are taxed.

In 2005, while McAuliffe was on his payroll, Quasha traveled to Bermuda to speak at the MARHedge World Wealth Summit, which addressed the topic "Hedge Fund Management in a Perilous Investment Climate." McAuliffe, too, weighed in on the well-being of hedge funds as the featured speaker at a 2006 investors' conference of the Carret unit Brean Murray, Carret & Co., where, according to advance publicity material, he planned to address the "current political debate in Washington, DC and its impact on Wall Street and the status of potential further hedge fund regulation." Also indicative of an interest in influencing hedge fund policy is the presence on Carret's International Advisory Board of Philippa Malmgren, who served as George W. Bush's liaison to the financial markets, and who often speaks and writes on politics and policy related to hedge funds.

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Hillary Clinton, whose daughter, Chelsea, works for a hedge fund run by a prominent Democratic donor—came in second only to Joe Lieberman in cash raised from hedge fund managers during the 2006 election cycle. She has belatedly and reluctantly joined other presidential candidates in calling for a change in the law so that fund managers would pay taxes at the same rate as everybody else. Clearly, her supporters among hedge fund figures have much to gain by electing a President who feels Wall Street's pain.

Whatever Carret's overall objectives, the company is on the march. "We've taken the Brean Murray and the Carret platforms and expanded them into China, India, Eastern Europe and Russia, and we will be doing so in Latin America as well," Nemazee said in a 2006 interview with *Leaders* magazine.

While Quasha & Co. keep an eye on hedge fund regulation, they also appear to be helping the repressive Chinese government keep an eye on its own people. Brean Murray, Carret recently acted as the sole placement agent in an $8 million deal with the Shenzhen-based China Security and Surveillance Technology. China Security won a contract last year from the quasi-governmental Shenzhen Cyber Café Association to install video monitoring systems for more than 1,000 local Internet cafes, popular outlets for criticism of the regime. A Brean Murray, Carret press release celebrates its cooperation with the clampdown: "the estimated 2.19 million registered entertainment halls in China must purchase video-monitoring systems covering entrances, exits and main corridors. The Company is actively pursuing similar opportunities within the other provinces of China."

Is there cause for concern over Alan Quasha's apparent efforts to gain influence with a potential President of the United States? Amazingly, to reassure the public on the integrity of its operation, the Clinton camp has rolled out none other than Quasha's business partner Hassan Nemazee. In an interview with the *New York Times* on the implications of the Hsu affair, Nemazee, who describes himself as an economic policy adviser to Hillary but was identified by the *Times* as a "fundraising bundler for Mrs. Clinton, as Mr. Hsu had been," declared, "The Clinton campaign has done as much if not more than any campaign to protect itself from situations such as this, and none of the other campaigns, other than hypocritically, can point a finger at the Clinton campaign on fundraising problems." ■

Father of History

Revelations about Herbert Aptheker ignite controversies over abuse, memory and scholarship.

by CHRISTOPHER PHELPS

When mourners filled Saint Peter's Church in Manhattan on October 16, 2003, to commemorate the life of Herbert Aptheker, the Marxist historian of slavery who died at 87, they did not lack for panegyrics. Eulogists celebrated Aptheker's commitment to interracial equality. They deplored the cold war stigma that precluded him, as a Communist Party member, from pursuing a scholarly career despite his Columbia University doctorate. They spoke of his collaborations with African-American intellectual W.E.B. Du Bois and of his deep love for Fay, his cousin, to whom he was married from 1942 until her death in 1999. Stanford historian Clayborne Carson bestowed upon Aptheker the honorifics of "white black red" and "white black historian."

Scarcely noticed amid the praise was an enigmatic, disquieting note introduced by the Aptheker's only child, Bettina, near the end of her own address. "Ten days after my mother died," she said, "Dad asked me if he had ever hurt me as a child. 'Yes,' I said finally, he had. And so we talked. For someone who never expressed personal emotion, who never processed anything, he was amazing. He stayed with this conversation with me for over an hour. He was filled with remorse and anguish. He asked me to forgive him. Of course I did. And then I wanted so much to help him to heal. But he closed off the subject. It was too much for him. Shutting down was what he had always done."

The precise nature of that painful past remained obscure until one year ago, when Seal Press published Bettina Aptheker's

Christopher Phelps, who teaches history at Ohio State University, Mansfield, wrote about the Aptheker revelations for The Chronicle of Higher Education.

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memoir *Intimate Politics: How I Grew Up Red, Fought for Free Speech, and Became a Feminist Rebel*. Its central revelation, that her father had sexually molested her when she was a child, set off a furious, still-unsettled Internet debate over the veracity of those memories and came as a bombshell to admirers accustomed to thinking of Herbert Aptheker as a stalwart opponent of oppression.

In *Intimate Politics*, Bettina Aptheker estimates that from the age of 3 or 4 until the age of 13, her father induced her to play "choo-choo train" on the rug of their Brooklyn apartment. In this game, he would press against her back, hold her tight, rock back and forth, and shudder, leaving her "wet and sticky."

"It didn't hurt," she writes. "He never hurt me. And I knew not to tell…because he told me 'terrible things will happen.'"

Her memoir traces a life's journey from a childhood insulated in New York's Jewish Communist left to Berkeley's 1964 Free Speech Movement and beyond. In its pages, Bettina Aptheker, now a feminist studies professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, reveals a great deal more: her inner desperation even as she projected herself as part of a "perfect family," her self-mutilation and suicidal inclinations, her never fully consensual affair with a Communist Party district leader and her transformation—hesitating at every step—as she became a feminist, divorced, came out as a lesbian, quit the Communist Party and adopted Buddhism.

Omnipresent in her life was her father, routinely described by the *New York Times* as "the leading theoretician of the American Communist Party," although the compliment was backhanded, appearing in an article with the title "Aptheker Hanged in Effigy." The Aptheker surname was a complex burden to bear. In the McCarthy era of Bettina's childhood, it meant subversion, but by the time of her young adulthood in the 1960s, a new generation of radicals faulted the Communist Party for insufficient radicalism.

Since *Intimate Politics* was published, last November, it has garnered modest attention in gay and feminist circles, including nomination for a Lambda Literary Award. Its greatest reverberations, however, have been among radicals, historians and African-Americans, particularly those who knew and respected Herbert Aptheker. Johnnetta Cole, the only person to serve as president of both Spelman and Bennett, the nation's two historically black women's colleges, professed at a February forum in Santa Cruz that she has been struggling to square "my image of Dr. Herbert Aptheker, the scholar-activist who taught me so much about American history, including American slavery," with "his daughter's description of her father's own enslavement to a sexual perversion."

Timothy Patrick McCarthy, a Harvard lecturer, met Herbert Aptheker in the 1990s as a graduate student at Columbia University and adopted him as a mentor, revering him as "a white guy doing African-American history at a time when white guys weren't doing African-American history." When McCarthy picked up *Intimate Politics* in a bookstore, his heart sank. "I was really devastated," he says. "It was the feeling that I had when I found out my hometown priest was sleeping with my peers and had been for a number of years."

Others were not quite able to believe the news. "I read the publisher's blurb and my jaw dropped," says Gary Murrell, a historian at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen, Washington, who conducted sixty hours of interviews with Aptheker and read deeply in his papers for a biography in progress. "It just seems out of character that he would have molested his daughter." After reading *Intimate Politics*, however, Murrell finds it "totally believable" and is grappling with how to reconcile its contents with the man he knew.

Kathryn Kish Sklar, co-director of the Center for the Historical Study of Women and Gender at Binghamton University, sees *Intimate Politics* as continuous with a tradition dating to the American Female Moral Reform Society of the 1830s of women making "public what previously had never been spoken" and challenging "behavior that turns people into means toward somebody else's ends." She is struck by the memoir's "generosity," its "clarity as an antecedent to forgiveness."

COURTESY OF THE BETTINA APTHEKER ARCHIVE, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UC SANTA CRUZ

Bettina Aptheker, 23, speaking at an antiwar rally, UC Berkeley, 1967

The compassionate, redemptive tone of the memoir is also appreciated by those who knew both father and daughter. Roger Wilkins, scion of the famous civil rights family, says, "I hate that it happened, to both of them. But I don't see Herbert as a monster, and I don't think that Bettina portrays him as such." John Bracey Jr., an African-American studies scholar at the University of Massachusetts, says, "If somebody had come to me and said that Herbert had done that, I wouldn't have believed it, but I also know that Bettina wouldn't make up something like that." Bracey admires her for not publicizing the matter until after her parents' deaths: "I think that we should thank her for the courage and selflessness in putting it out this way so that it saved her but it also didn't hurt anybody else. That's pretty rare, to take the weight herself for that long."

Online, however, critics rapidly expressed doubts about Bettina's revelation. Participants on the H-Net discussion list of the History of American Communism homed in on her admission that she had failed to remember the abuse for decades. "Without corroboration, Bettina's recovered memories are less than convincing evidence," wrote Melvyn Dubofsky. *FrontPage*

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Magazine's David Horowitz went further: "I happen to suspect that the incest story is probably made up—because of everything we know about the repressed memory genre." Though less disbelieving, Ronald Radosh suggested, "She should have done this when he was alive, so he could answer." Clare Spark suggested Bettina Aptheker might be inventing tales "to demonstrate that she has overcome yet another assault by authority" or as "a way of getting attention from reviewers for her book."

The skeptics include both conservatives (Horowitz and Radosh were raised on the Communist left, became New Leftists, then turned rightward) and left-liberals (Dubofsky and Spark). They converge in viewing Bettina Aptheker as an accuser regardless of her memoir's tone of equanimity, in desiring evidence beyond her testimony and in doubting the worthiness of recovered memory.

Leading the countercharge in Bettina Aptheker's defense was Jesse Lemisch, a red-diaper baby and defender of Herbert Aptheker's academic freedom in the mid-1970s, when Yale's history department, led by C. Vann Woodward, refused to permit him to teach a seminar. On the History News Network (HNN), Lemisch held that a mostly "male gender solidarity" of deniers across the political spectrum had shown "emotional deficit" by failing to acknowledge the extent of inappropriate sexual contact in families. He noted that Bettina's claims were made not in a court with strict rules of evidence but in the realm of history and memoir, which deal in the likely. Observing the "shame and stigma" surrounding child sexual abuse, he pilloried the image of a family seated "around the Norman Rockwell Thanksgiving dinner table, and as Dad carves the turkey, they ask, 'Dad, why did you do that to me? Mom, why did you let him?'"

As debate unfolded across the Internet, those inclined to believe the revelations within *Intimate Politics*, often women, cited their own abuse experiences and pointed to proven scandals such as those of the Catholic Church and Representative Mark Foley. Critics invoked James Frey's fabricated memoir *A Million Little Pieces* and the "false memory syndrome" typified by the McMartin Preschool case of the 1980s, when children under suggestive therapy accused caregivers of Satanic ritual abuse. Opinion divided over what HNN termed the Aptheker revelations—a phrase evocative of the 1956 Khrushchev revelations, when Soviet admission of Stalin's malevolence sent American Communism into a tailspin.

Bettina Aptheker's accent, although sanded by four decades in California, still carries traces of her Brooklyn upbringing. "I expected much worse," she says of the criticism to which her book has been subjected. "But I wanted it to be honest or there was no point. This shaped a tremendous amount about my life."

Since sexual abuse occurs in private, its verification is always difficult. In this case, a half-century has passed. No diary, letter or photograph is likely to turn up to mollify doubters. Without siblings, enjoined to secrecy, Bettina Aptheker confided in no one. "The closest corroboration you get," she says, "is the conversation with my father."

That conversation took place in a car on the way home from a Vietnamese restaurant in 1999, soon after her mother's death. (Her 2003 eulogy dated the exchange as ten days later; *Intimate Politics* dates it as seventeen days later.) Out of the blue, her father asked whether he had ever hurt her when she was a child. After a moment's hesitation, she responded, "Yes." He asked, "What did I do?" "You were sexually inappropriate," she replied. When? he asked. When we were playing together? Yes. Did he arouse himself? Ejaculate? Penetrate? To each question except the last, she answered in the affirmative.

Witnessing this exchange from the driver's seat was Kate Miller, Bettina's partner. "It was one of the most extraordinary conversations I've ever been privy to," says Miller, who agreed to be interviewed only after persistent requests. "I have never seen anyone so filled with remorse. And that speaks to a strain of goodness. It was absolutely unendurable to him, and that's what he kept saying."

Sexual abuse is always difficult to verify. 'The closest corroboration you get,' says Bettina Aptheker, 'is the conversation with my father.'

So effusive was his contrition, says Bettina Aptheker, that she let go of her anger. Her forgiveness was eased by her conjecture that he may have been abused as a child. She maintained her conciliatory disposition even when he began to backpedal that very night, saying he could not accept her account. "He never accused me of lying," she states. Miller confirms, "He never felt Bettina was accusing. He never felt that, that I ever saw. He would keep saying, 'It can't be so.' And then she would say, 'But Dad, it was so.' He would say, 'I can't stand it.' And she would say, 'Sure you can. I've stood it all these years.' But he never, ever came close to saying anything like, 'You're making this up.' Never."

Aptheker's memories flooded back in the 1990s, when she was in her 50s. "I could have written this as though it was not recovered memory," she observes. "I didn't do that, because I wanted to tell the truth." She was not in therapy at the time. She was writing her autobiography, and the segments on her childhood seemed "flat" to her partner and daughter, who encouraged her to reveal more of her interior thoughts. At about that time, she happened to watch a Hollywood movie (not on child sexual abuse) that struck an emotive chord, prompting her recollections and causing her to enter a period of deep pain and coping that her 32-year-old daughter, Jenny Kurzweil, then in college, describes as extraordinarily difficult to watch.

The scientific and psychological literature on memory and abuse is contested, but a number of studies have concluded that it is not rare for those abused in childhood to lose memory of it for long stretches. Although survivors suffer adverse psychological effects, they often forget the abuse, particularly if they did not feel physically threatened by it. "You can have something that is morally reprehensible, like sexual abuse, but the child doesn't understand it," says Richard McNally, a prominent memory researcher at Harvard University. "They're not traumatized. They may be upset, they may be confused, but they're not traumatized in the sense of experiencing terror and the release of stress hormones that render the memory unforgettable."

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McNally and other psychologists disparage the notion that awful memories are erased by "repression," the Freudian terminology that Bettina Aptheker employs. They explain such memory lapses by other processes, such as atrophy, absence of retrieval cues, lack of rehearsal (as when a topic is secret and not discussed) or avoidance. Few psychologists, however, dismiss entirely the plausibility of forgetting and later recalling childhood sexual abuse. Insofar as the "memory wars" have yielded any common ground, it is that recovered memories of child sexual abuse should be neither accepted credulously nor denied peremptorily.

If radicalism means going to the root, a great deal of digging is now required to locate Herbert Aptheker's legacy. Someone someday may pore over every line Aptheker wrote, searching for hints of his conduct on the living-room floor. The search is likely to prove arid, for his scholarship was quintessentially Old Left. "I remember one time having a conversation with him about how to incorporate gender and sexuality into one's worldview and one's analytical framework," says Timothy Patrick McCarthy. "He kind of scoffed at that, as if it was a detour from what was really at stake."

Most historians, all too cognizant of human failing, will concur that Aptheker's writings should "stand or fall on their own merit," as states Eric Foner, co-editor with Manning Marable of the anthology *Herbert Aptheker on Race and Democracy*, recently issued by the University of Illinois Press. David Levering Lewis, the Pulitzer Prize–winning biographer of W.E.B. Du Bois, calls his debt to Aptheker "incommensurable" and asks, "Is he any less a decent Marxist scholar for having done what he did? No question about his paternal deficiencies."

The motif of *Intimate Politics* that personal life has public implications, however, would seem to make a thoroughgoing reconsideration of Herbert Aptheker inescapable. That moral inventory would necessarily include not only his treatment of his daughter but also the incongruities of the midcentury Communist project he championed, with its admixture of authoritarianism and liberation. Along with paeans to black freedom, Aptheker penned a host of pro-Soviet apologetics, justifying, for example, the crushing of Hungarian workers' councils in 1956. Even his African-American histories found their critics. C.L.R. James regretted his works as "weapons in the Stalinist propaganda armory." Harold Cruse objected to "the sentimental slave hero worship of the Aptheker cult."

Few today, however, would deny that *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* (1951) was a resource without parallel in its time or that *American Negro Slave Revolts* (1943) helped overturn the stereotype of the singing, contented slave. Historian Ira Berlin says that because slave insurrections were "extraordinarily rare events," Aptheker may have overstated their prevalence, but he adds that Aptheker's work was "very, very important" in "breaking the silence on the resistance, and particularly the violent resistance, of slaves."

"If I am right," says Bettina Aptheker, "and he was abused as a child in some manner, shape or form, he may well have had his own memories of that but never talked about it. We don't know. If that were true, one way of sublimating that would be in terms of fierce opposition to oppression, as in slavery. You can see there's a correlation there. But that's entirely speculative." ■

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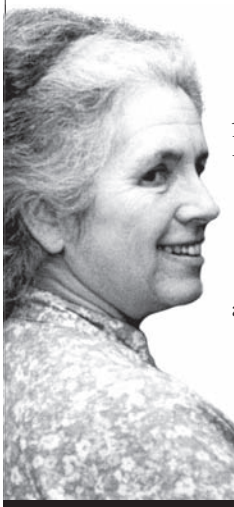

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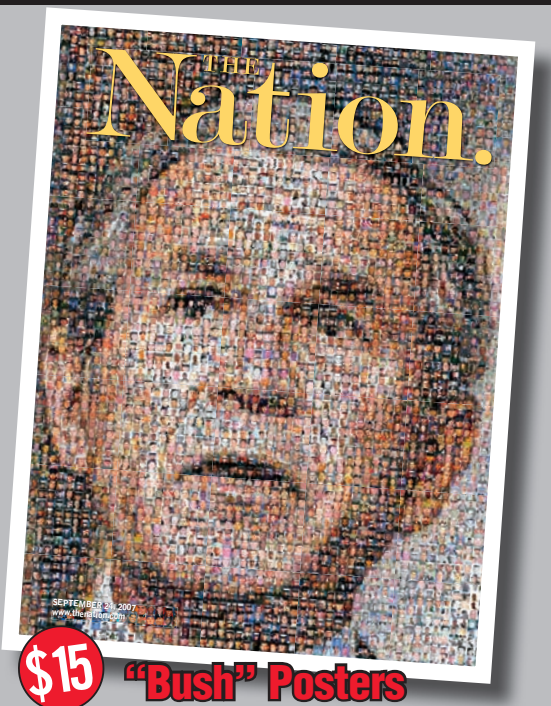

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Al Franken Seeks the Wellstone Seat

The former *SNL* comedian and radio host is the champion of an old-fashioned liberal credo.

by JOHN NICHOLS

That familiar-looking candidate in the dark Washington-ready suit appears entirely at ease in front of the crowd of earnest activists who have gathered at Minneapolis's Augsburg College. They have come to review the relative merits of the man who would carry the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party's (DFL) banner into what will likely be the fiercest Senate race of 2008. The candidate listens intently when questions come his way, goes slightly but never theatrically serious as matters of war and peace arise, yet knows precisely when to add a measure of the hokey self-deprecation that is a staple of Minnesota politics.

Al Franken is smooth without being slick; he's smart and steadily senatorial. Yes, senatorial. As the candidate makes the case that he is the right man to reclaim the seat once held by his friend Paul Wellstone, memories of bumbling self-help TV character Stuart Smalley, of the comedian who proclaimed that the 1980s would be "The Al Franken Decade" and even of the political prankster who so infuriated Bill O'Reilly that the Fox bloviator ranted, "Shut up! Shut up!" are slowly displaced by recognition that the actor who segued from his *Saturday Night Live* persona to serving as a fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government is a serious new voice in American politics.

Franken is not playing catch-up. He is not learning the ropes. Yes, of course, his celebrity helps. Not every first-time candidate is greeted by spontaneous chants of "Al! Al! Al!" while working the crowds at the Twin Cities Gay Pride Parade and "Franken! Franken! Franken!" along the route of the Fourth of July parade in rural Brainerd. But when Franken is asked what he will do about healthcare or free trade or ending the war in Iraq, the fun and games stop. He does not "de-humorize" himself; there are still flashes of wit. But there is, as well, a depth of knowledge and a sense of purpose that makes it clear Franken has no taste for campaigning as performance art. "Ask Al about an issue, any issue, and he'll give you chapter and verse," says Niel Ritchie, executive director of the Minneapolis-based League of Rural Voters. "That's what strikes people. After they get over the fact that he's this guy they've seen a thousand times telling jokes on TV, they start to notice that he knows more than some senators, maybe more than most senators. And that he's connecting what he knows about policy to their experience. It's powerful stuff."

After three years of hosting an Air America radio show that was supposed to be funny but ended up spending enormous amounts of time pondering No Child Left Behind, and after writing a stack of books that mixed punch lines with pragmatic liberal responses to every Bush/Cheney initiative, Al Franken enters politics a confident man. He knows the issues. And he knows there is nothing funny about the task he has taken on. The men who would deny him the DFL nomination treat him as the frontrunner, prodding this determinedly mainstream liberal for being too cautious in challenging the Administration. At the same time, supporters of embattled GOP incumbent Norm Coleman—a man who was recruited to national politics by Karl Rove and Dick Cheney and who has done nothing to disappoint his mentors—bash hysterically at an Al Franken they portray as a wild-eyed radical driven by rage at all things conservative, Republican and American.

The notion that Franken has fully arrived on the political stage takes some getting used to. Even he admits that Minnesotans "have a right to be skeptical" about whether a gag writer who spent the better part of two decades presenting himself on national TV as an arrogant jerk strung out on his own celebrity is sincere when he says his fondest desire now is "to serve the working people of Minnesota" and, perhaps, to restore the promise of American liberalism. But Franken is almost a year into a campaign that has consumed the funnyman of old and produced a conscientious candidate who, a year from now, might well be on his way to sitting beside Ted Kennedy and Patrick Leahy on the liberal—if not quite Russ Feingold progressive—flank of the Democratic caucus.

If Franken wins, and if he keeps growing as he has during his Minnesota campaign, he could emerge as one of the most significant exponents of mainstream liberalism in a generation, picking up and carrying forward the battered banner of his ideology the way Ronald Reagan reinvigorated the conservative cause in the aftermath of Barry Goldwater's failed 1964 presidential campaign.

Grassroots Democrats who have had a rough go of it in the past few years respond to Franken as battered grassroots Republicans did to Reagan in the mid-1960s. Franken does not work the streets in the towns along Minnesota's Iron Range, the union-dominated heartland of the DFL, in the usual fashion of visiting pols, alone or with a solitary aide. Franken wears a navy-blue United Steelworkers T-shirt and is surrounded by USW members, who form a posse on his behalf. His appearance in Duluth shortly after he formally announced his candidacy drew 800 people and inspired a columnist for the local union paper, the venerable *Labor World*, to write, "In all my years…I've never seen so many people there.… Al Franken has northern Minnesota progressives fired up and ready to go to work."

There is nothing novel these days about actors, radio hosts, authors, billionaires and even the accidentally or tragically famous entering politics. But celebrities come to the campaign trail in different ways, and with decidedly different purposes. There is no useful reference point for Franken's run to be found, for instance, in the political career of fellow Minnesotan Jesse "The Body" Ventura, who never quite stepped out of his all-star-wrestler character during a single uninspired term as governor. Nor is Franken a Midwestern version of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg or most of the other famous or rich, or rich and famous, fellows who have in recent years spun their prominence

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into a measure of political gold. The model for a contemporary celebrity candidate is that of someone who rises above politics. But Franken is the champion of an old-fashioned liberal credo—rooted in the spirit of Franklin Roosevelt and Wellstone—that rejects the notion that government is evil.

Despite Minnesota GOP chairman Ron Carey's characterization of him as "the most far-left, polarizing and out-of-the-mainstream candidate to run for the US Senate in our state," Franken is no radical. His is a traditional and sometimes frustratingly responsible liberalism. He favors single-payer healthcare but says it will have to be achieved in steps because the political will is not yet there for the great leap forward. He preaches the gospel of energy independence, only to scare people with Al Gore–style speculation on the green virtues of nuclear power. After initially accepting at least some of the Administration's arguments for invading Iraq, Franken emerged several years ago as a vocal critic of the war. He now argues that Congress should use the power of the purse to force Bush to start bringing troops home. Yet the candidate's still a little murky on the precise timing of the withdrawal process—not because he doesn't want it to happen but because he frets about getting the exit right. In the Senate, Franken would generally vote as Wellstone did, although it might take some prodding to get him to take some of Wellstone's riskier positions.

On the "government is good" theme that Wellstone so deeply valued, however, Franken needs no encouragement. Here, he becomes the great communicator. "As a middle-class kid growing up in Minnesota [in the 1950s and '60s], I felt like the luckiest kid in the world. And I was," explains Franken, whose argument that government exists to "provide security" for middle-class families like his own and a leg up for working-poor families like that of his wife, Franni, strikes a homespun, nostalgic note. "Maybe you know what it's like to be one health crisis away from bankruptcy. Maybe you, or your parents or grandparents, can't afford prescriptions. Maybe you have kids, and you're worried about paying for their college. Maybe someone you love is in Iraq, and you don't know how long they'll have to stay there, or what will happen when they come home. Middle-class families today struggle with that feeling of insecurity—the sense that things can fall apart without notice, outside of your control. Your government should have your back. That should be our mission in Washington."

Franken points to people's overwhelming rejection of privatizing Social Security and says, "I think most Americans are liberals." He's running not to replace old paradigms of left versus right or Democrat versus Republican, as Schwarzenegger and Bloomberg sometimes claim to do, but as a candidate who accepts the paradigms while suggesting that some tricks learned backstage at *SNL* might make it easier to master them. And Franken has proven to be masterful.

A year before the 2008 election, it is clear the comedian is a serious candidate. His fundraising, in Minnesota and nationally, is phenomenal. He has already outraised Coleman in two quarterly cycles, creating a sense that Franken will be able to match the incumbent blow for blow in a Senate race that could easily cost the candidates $20 million. Polls show Franken, who once trailed Coleman by a wide margin, pulling even. And the challenger's tireless trekking across Minnesota has eased doubts about his viability. "The only way we're going to win this race is with a candidate who's passionate, principled and understands how the failed Republican agenda impacts Minnesota families. That's Al," declares State Senator Steve Murphy, a Democrat from the Mississippi River factory town of Red Wing, which is about as far from Hollywood or New York as you can get physically and politically. Murphy, who represents some of Minnesota's most competitive swing counties, is not one to bestow an endorsement casually. Nor are the forty-two other DFL legislators who have endorsed Franken, along with powerful Teamsters and Steelworkers district councils and locals in a state with deep labor traditions.

The deal has not been closed, however, not even among Democrats. To a far greater extent than any Democratic Party in the country, the DFL is organized down to the precinct level. At precinct caucuses in February, thousands of party activists will begin choosing delegates to a state convention that will endorse a Senate candidate in June. The convention endorsement could still be challenged in a September primary, but Franken, like his challengers, has agreed to abide by the convention's call. This means that the party's Senate nominee will be chosen by party activists who are serious about winning elections and

ERIC MILLER/REUTERS

pushing the political discourse to the left. The DFL has historically been remarkably good at identifying what Democratic Socialists of America founder Michael Harrington used to refer to as "the left wing of the possible." No one in Minnesota loses sight of the fact that it is Wellstone's seat, the loss of which DFLers have never accepted, that will be filled in 2008.

Not all DFLers are on board for Franken, who is still seen by many as a divisive figure. While he is better known than the other Democrats, Franken has an unfavorable rating of 34 percent among Minnesota voters. With the state trending in a Democratic direction that suggests Coleman's close ties to the Bush Administration will be a major burden, there are a good many DFL stalwarts who think the party should nominate a "blank slate" contender without the baggage carried by a candidate whose references to Republicans as "shameless dicks" might undermine his bipartisan appeal. The state GOP organization drives the point home with a steady stream of "Franken

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Is an Angry, Mean-Spirited and Divisive Partisan" press hits.

Most of the anybody-but-Franken energy has moved toward Mike Ciresi, a tort lawyer who made a fortune suing tobacco firms and other corporations and then earned a fine reputation giving away portions of the settlement fees to noble educational and community causes in Minnesota. Ciresi is sincere and credible, if uninspiring. His hope is that major labor unions, particularly those representing public employees and teachers, will decide that Franken is too risky a pick and swing their considerable influence behind a less volatile contender. Franken's aides don't seem overly concerned, in part because his fundraising prowess has decreased the appeal of a self-financed candidate like Ciresi and in part because Ciresi seems to be struggling to distinguish himself from the frontrunner.

Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, an assistant professor of justice and peace studies at the University of St. Thomas, doesn't have to. Even Franken hails Nelson-Pallmeyer, a veteran Twin Cities activist who is in the race for the DFL nod as an antiwar champion. And rightly so. When Franken was cautiously finding his antiwar footing in 2003, Nelson-Pallmeyer was rallying opposition to the invasion with passion and consistency. Nelson-Pallmeyer offers DFLers concerned that Franken is a mainstream liberal rather than a muscular leftie an appealing alternative. Franken's regard for him is obvious. At a Progressive Caucus debate, the frontrunner recalled the professor's prewar activism and told the crowd, "I regret not doing what Jack did." In his own defense, Franken added, "Once it became clear [that the Iraq attack was based on lies], no one spoke against this war more than I did—three hours a day." The reference to his Air America gig returned Franken to his strength: he may not be a perfect progressive, but he is an able popularizer of progressive ideas. Indeed, as the Progressive Caucus debate unfolded, it was Franken who kept expanding the focus, bringing up without prompting his concerns about media consolidation, passionately arguing that it is essential to control the influence of corporate money in our politics and blasting the Bush Administration and Coleman.

It was only after Ronald Reagan won a surprisingly large victory in his 1966 Republican primary over a moderate former mayor of San Francisco that national reporters began to recognize that he might not be the "lightweight amateur" or the "spokesman for a harsh philosophy" Democrats dismissed. Indeed, as a *Time* writer suggested, the fact that Reagan had "maintained a nice-guy, down-to-earth presence while perfecting a smooth platform style throughout a durable career as radio announcer, movie actor, lecturer and television performer" might just make him a "tremendous" new voice, not merely for conservatism but for the Republican Party. Al Franken still has some campaigning to do to get to the point where Reagan was when those words were written. But if Franken gets there, and if the names, dates and ideologies are changed, the comparison with the Great Communicator could turn out to be more apt, and more significant over the long term, than conservatives or liberals, Republicans or Democrats, dare imagine. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

ning news program. I think it started earlier, with his broadcasts from London during the Blitz. I was only 8, but I still get chills when I recall the first simple words of the broadcasts: "This… is London." If there's a God and he speaks, he'll sound like Murrow. Olbermann has earned the right to use Murrow's closing line: "Good-night and good luck."

Ray Morris

A Russian Soldier's Story

Victoria, B.C., Canada

Having served in Afghanistan as a Soviet soldier in the 1980s, I read "The Other War" by Chris Hedges and Laila Al-Arian [July 30/Aug. 6] with great interest. Making notes in its margins on the parallels with the Soviet experience in Afghanistan, I quickly ran out of space: objectifying an occupied population, indiscriminate use of violence, dehumanizing a largely invisible enemy, committing war crimes while not recognizing them as such, believing our adversaries deserve what they get.

In the 1980s, while Soviet media focused on "normalization" of life in Afghanistan, insurgents' brutality and the personalities and experiences of the Soviet soldiers, the West concentrated on the legitimate question, What right do the Soviets have to be in Afghanistan? As the victims of aggression, Afghans were the focus of sympathetic Western media coverage; some were even brought to the United States to testify about their suffering. But current coverage of Iraq turns a deaf ear to the voices of Iraqis.

"The Other War" is a lonely attempt to bring the Iraqi side of the story to Americans, who, like the Soviets in Afghanistan, can't take responsibility for destroying Iraq because they don't know the truth. It took me years to recognize the Soviet occupation for what it was. Now I see the same lack of awareness in America. In the 1980s the West believed "there is no denying the legitimacy of the [Afghans'] fight against a destiny imposed by foreign tanks" (Gérard Chaliand, *Report From Afghanistan*). Afghans' right to self-determination was taken for granted. Today, it's not even suggested that Iraqis have the same right to resist occupation.

The Soviet media condemned any comparison of Soviets in Afghanistan to Americans in Vietnam. Now I see the same denial by Americans of how similar they are to the Soviets. After experiencing both Soviet and Western cultures, I find the war illusions of both to be the same. Westerners reject being compared to "those crazy Communists," and Russians, including my veteran friends, are angered by the same comparisons. They don't see similarities with American soldiers, who "just shoot Iraqis and Afghans indiscriminately." Everyone insists "we're not like them." Nobody is willing to turn a critical eye in their own direction.

When a work similar to "The Other War" appeared in Russia, it upset many people. Like US vets labeled "unpatriotic traitors" for telling the truth, Soviet soldiers were accused of "smearing their homeland" by speaking out. Soviets were divided into those who were "proud of our soldiers" and those saying "bring our boys home."

The history of any occupation is the story of its victims. It took nine years and 1.5 million Afghan lives for the USSR to leave a devastated country. In Iraq, an estimated 1 million people have already died since the US invasion. How many more will it take before Americans will do what they rightly demanded from the Soviets a mere twenty years ago?

Nikolai Lanine

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Books & the Arts.

DOUG CHAYKA

Big Red Checkbook

by JOHN FEFFER

"The glory of Our Empire shines on this universe with brilliance," a ruler once declared in a letter to courtiers in London. "Not one single person or country is excluded from Our kindness and benevolence." He had good reason to be pleased. His country sat astride the global economy. His army was large, his domains vast. He believed his country to be the center of the world, and a good chunk of the world agreed.

And yet, despite the fulsome satisfaction of this 1805 letter, its author, the head of the Manchu Qing dynasty and emperor of China, had cause for anxiety. Less than twenty years before, China had suffered a humiliating defeat in Vietnam and continued to have difficulty besting the Burmese, Tibetans and Zunghars. Trade with Europe was still expanding rapidly. But the European powers were quickly getting the upper hand by controlling shipping and financial flows, and China was developing a dangerous dependency on silver and opium. Until the late nineteenth century, China's economy was the largest in the world, but then it headed precipitously downward. The Chinese knew practically nothing about the modern firearms with which Europe was taking over the world.

Did the advisers to the Jiaqing Emperor warn him of the coming conflict with Europe and the potential collapse of the Chinese Empire? Perhaps some courageous and far-seeing mandarin spoke of Europe's rise, of the dangerous trajectory of the terms of trade, of the military modernizations of Britain, of the equally pernicious soft power of missionaries and merchants. The documentary evidence makes no mention of such a pundit. In 1816, after dealing with barbar-

Charm Offensive
How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World.
By Joshua Kurlantzick.
Yale. 306 pp. $26.

Rising Star
China's New Security Diplomacy.
By Bates Gill.
Brookings Institution. 267 pp. $28.95.

A War Like No Other
The Truth About China's Challenge to America.
By Richard C. Bush and Michael E. O'Hanlon.
Wiley & Sons. 232 pp. $25.95.

Challenging China
Struggle and Hope in an Era of Change: Independent Chinese Voices on Life in Contemporary China.
Edited by Sharon Hom and Stacy Mosher.
New Press. 313 pp. $29.95.

China
Fragile Superpower.
By Susan L. Shirk.
Oxford. 320 pp. $27.

China Road
A Journey Into the Future of a Rising Power.
By Rob Gifford.
Random House. 322 pp. $26.95.

John Feffer, co-director of Foreign Policy in Focus at the Institute for Policy Studies, is the author of North Korea, South Korea: U.S. Policy at a Time of Crisis *(Seven Stories).*

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ians from Britain who refused to kowtow to the emperor, the Chinese court sent another letter to London: "The Celestial Empire has little regard for foreign things." By the time China learned the value of foreign things and adopted the Japanese approach of "Eastern thought, Western machines," it would be too late. The Chinese Empire had been carved up like a crisp Peking duck.

Two hundred years later, the roles are reversed. As John Quincy Adams once accused the Chinese of "arrogant and insupportable pretensions," so now America is subjected to the slings and arrows of the world's disgruntled and disaffected. Yet the US President surveys his realm and sees only cause for satisfaction: America is God's country and Americans his chosen people. There are barbarians at the gate, of course, repudiators of American benevolence who must be crushed. A small clutch of imperial cheerleaders, the Max Boots and Niall Fergusons, thrill to the President's muscular stance. Pundits, meanwhile, play the latest intellectual parlor game: name that imperial analogy. Will the US empire end with a Roman bang or a British whimper? Or, blind to the desperate need for reform and a tempering of arrogance, will the United States suffer China's nineteenth-century fate? In place of opium, there are the distracting pleasures of Chinese goods for sale at Wal-Mart. Instead of the redoubtable Vietnamese, there are the recalcitrant Iraqis.

In contrast to the emperor's court, an army of advisers are scrambling to warn Washington of the only threat on the horizon that could displace the United States in the next few decades. Their books assess China's potential at the periphery and in the Eurasian heartland. China is using trade and no-strings-attached aid to inveigle its way into the hearts of Africans and Latin Americans. It is building up its military and risking a showdown with the United States, most likely over Taiwan. Internal weaknesses such as poverty and corruption threaten to undermine the current Chinese system and create international havoc. President Bush is certainly getting more advice than the Chinese emperor did 200 years ago. But the warnings of impending confrontation reflect less the realities of China's new global stance than the unrealities of the US foreign policy establishment, which believes that the laws of geopolitics require an equal but opposite fall on the other side of the globe.

The "yellow peril" was once feared for the damage it could do near home. Washington strategists stayed up late at night worrying about Mao knocking down dominoes the length of the Asian littoral. There was also the Chinese influence in South Asia, and the Kremlin's worries about the Soviet Union's borders and millions of land-poor Chinese swarming into Siberia. But although China inspired the leadership of Albania, some Maoist guerrillas in Peru and a handful of French and American students in the 1970s, Beijing's influence outside its neighborhood was marginal.

Now that the Big Red Checkbook has replaced the Little Red Book, China has expanded its reach into far-flung regions. Journalist Joshua Kurlantzick has been writing about the rise of China's soft power for several years, and in his recent book *Charm Offensive* he describes a chessboard world in which one side's advancing pawns grab power from the other side's retreating rooks. "As the United States remains unpopular in many parts of the world, China finds willing partners," Kurlantzick writes. "In the worst-case scenario, China eventually will use soft power to push countries to choose between closer ties to Washington and closer ties to Beijing."

As the US did during the cold war, China is cozying up to the powerful and buying influence.

China is simply doing what the United States did during the cold war: cozying up to the powerful, extracting resources and buying influence. Kurlantzick expands Joseph Nye's classic formulation of soft power to include formal diplomacy and economic leverage alongside the more informal export of cultural values and norms. He describes a China of deep pockets that provides more loans to Africa than the World Bank, has promised $100 billion of investments to Argentina and Brazil, snatched up factories the world over and replaced striking workers with compliant Chinese, and outmaneuvered Japan to conclude a recent free-trade agreement with Southeast Asia.

Economic influence is not even the half of it. Nearly three millennia of fearing the outside world, which stretched from the Great Wall to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, have abruptly ended. Multilateralism is the new watchword for China's 4,000 diplomats, half of whom are younger than 35, according to a 2005 study. China has become the great joiner—facilitating the six-party talks over the North Korean nuclear crisis, convening the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Central Asia, even becoming an observer in the Organization of American States. It has created its own version of the Peace Corps that sends Chinese youth to developing countries. With the Beijing Olympics set for next year, China is doing a credible imitation of a good sport.

Kurlantzick seems taken aback at times that China's advances are built on great-power realism rather than fortune-cookie idealism. Beijing wants stability in its immediate environs and raw materials from Africa and Latin America to fuel its growth. It will break strikes, support the Mugabes and Karimovs of the world and ignore environmental standards to achieve these goals. When Communist China first opened to the capitalist West in the early 1970s, the Chinese leaders imprinted on Henry Kissinger, the first Western mug they saw up close. Like love-blind chicks, Mao's heirs have been following Kissingerian realpolitik ever since.

And yet China is not a chess player making zero-sum calculations, particularly in its relations with Washington. In 2004 Colin Powell aptly described US-Chinese relations in the George W. Bush era as the best in thirty years. China and the United States are cooperating on containing North Korea, countering terrorists in Asia and expanding the global economy. Naturally, disagreements have arisen over intervention in Darfur and US military bases in Central Asia. The United States has been haranguing China to float its currency to raise the price of Chinese exports (and theoretically reduce Washington's massive trade deficit with Beijing). But spats are to be expected in any marriage, especially one of convenience. The relationship is sustained in part because of mutual economic interest. China is propping up the US economy with its purchase of Treasury bonds, and American consumers keep the Chinese economy humming with super-sized purchases of everything from cheap toys to high-end electronics.

When it comes to US-China relations, Washington's mandarin class is worried less about soft-power competition at the margins than military confrontation over Taiwan, head-to-head economic competition and the potential of China to implode politically. To achieve credibility in a Washington devoted to "congagement"—containing China militarily and engaging it economically—most China watchers try to stake out the middle ground between panda-hugging and China-bashing. Against the huggers they as-

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sert that China is indeed a potential military threat; against the bashers they qualify China as only a selective menace.

The issue of greatest controversy is China's increased military spending. Beijing argues that it is spending around $36 billion a year; some US estimates run double or even triple that amount. However you slice it, China wants a world-class army to match its world-class economy. But with its air and sea power still limited, China has an anemic ability to project force over distance. A mere twenty long-range nuclear missiles serve as a very slender deterrent force. And while the bean counters scrutinize China's arms purchases, the annual US military budget has sailed past $500 billion (not including the Iraq and Afghanistan supplemental spending). To match the United States, China would have to play Soviet-style catch-up, and it knows the endpoint of that strategy.

Workaday tyrannies, more than the jailings of dissidents, could be cancerous in the long run.

It's not China's arsenal but its military strategy that has undergone the more telling transformation, and here Bates Gill, a scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, offers some useful insights. "China is unlikely to seek aggressive territorial gains into areas of core American strategic interest, such as the heart of Europe, or seek to extend imperial dominion across vast areas of Pacific Asia, or attack American possessions to meet those aims," he writes in his dry but important new book *Rising Star*. "Beijing does not seek to spread Communist ideals, establish global networks of ideological client states, or foment revolution in the developing world." China has quietly become a major advocate of arms control, even undertaking several important unilateral nonproliferation initiatives, such as pledging to the United States to cut its nuclear ties to Iran. Its share of global arms exports fell from around 4 percent in the early 1990s to less than 2 percent between 2000 and 2004. It has placed a qualitative cap on its own nuclear modernization program and thrown open its military exercises to foreign observers from the United States, Europe, Asia and Africa.

At the same time, China has gradually altered what had previously been a strident position on sovereignty. Beijing still asserts the principles of noninterference and peaceful coexistence, repackaged as its "new security concept," particularly in the face of potential military interventions in Sudan, Iran and elsewhere. Beyond the rhetoric, however, Beijing has clearly compromised its previously literal understanding of sovereignty. Witness its power-sharing arrangement with Hong Kong and its support of US intervention in Afghanistan. It currently provides "more civilian police, military observers, and troops to UN peacekeeping operations than any of the other permanent five members of the UN Security Council—and more than any NATO country," Gill writes. Sovereignty in today's globalizing world is the refuge of the weak and the privilege of the strong. China, caught somewhere between the two poles, has taken a pragmatically flexible approach.

On the issue of Taiwan, however, Beijing retains an old-fashioned inflexibility. For Washington, the island is a foreign policy issue; Beijing, on the other hand, considers Taiwan a family problem, one that will eventually be resolved internally by persuasion or, if necessary, by force. Because foreign policy analysts inside the Beltway are essentially risk analysts, those who follow East Asia are drawn to likely flashpoints. Journalists Richard Bernstein and Ross Munro tried to make the case for a "coming conflict with China" in their 1997 book of the same name, pointing to Taiwan as the spark. A decade later, even as Taiwan has moved closer to formal independence, the "global war on terror" has eclipsed the presumed China threat.

Richard Bush and Michael O'Hanlon have tried to update this argument in *A War Like No Other*. They promise "the truth about China's challenge to America" but have to jump-start their argument by turning back the clock to 1995–96, the tensest moments in recent US-Chinese relations. At that time, the Clinton Administration reversed restrictions on US visits by high-level Taiwanese officials and let President Lee Teng-hui visit his alma mater, Cornell; Beijing retaliated by sending missiles in the direction of Taiwan and conducting large-scale military exercises. Bush and O'Hanlon imagine a repeat scenario in which "in a fog of miscommunication and politics, an enraged China prepares to attack the island" and the United States comes to Taiwan's defense: "No one backs down—each has too much at stake," they write, and then string together a series of maybes that lead to a "terrifying scenario." It reads like the kind of overstatement that foreign policy analysts resort to in order to pitch skeptical editors yet another article or book on China.

A conflict over Taiwan could indeed result from Taiwanese impatience, Chinese nationalism and US pigheadedness. Taiwan continues to make noises about shifting from de facto to de jure sovereign status. Although large majorities of Americans oppose war with China over Taiwan, more than 90 percent of the Chinese people support military action against Taiwan if it splits.

But Bush and O'Hanlon concede that the economies of China and Taiwan have grown inextricably linked, as have the Chinese and American economies. And despite several chapters devoted to an extended war-gaming scenario, they admit that "most hypothetical causes of war" between Washington and Beijing "turn out, upon inspection, to have little or no basis." Even if their premises are sensational, their advice is sensible: Washington should help Beijing and Taipei toward "a more benign, unification-friendly sovereignty" for Taiwan. After all, what would Beijing do with the island after military takeover? Taiwan is no Tibet. It is a powerful capitalist country that has developed a strong taste for democracy. Beijing beware: even a small bone, if swallowed the wrong way, can prove deadly.

Washington should pay less attention to the strength of China, some knowledgeable courtiers are whispering, and more to the great country's weakness. In this telling of the story, China is an elaborate pyramid scam, its prosperity resting on a foundation of sand. Only by continuing to generate unprecedented levels of growth—11 percent in 2006—can China continue to fool its domestic supporters and foreign investors into playing the game. Inside China, troubling stories appear every day. There is rampant corruption. Some grow impossibly rich while many remain impatiently poor. Tens of thousands of protests break out in the cities and the countryside every year. The AIDS and SARS scandals, the harrowing coal mine disasters, the ruthless suppression of dissidents—eloquently described by Chinese activists themselves in the new collection *Challenging China*, edited by Human Rights in China staffers Sharon Hom and Stacy Mosher—all have the potential of sapping the confidence of the population in the leadership's capacity to govern.

In the most poignant chapter in the collection, "The View Beneath the Bridge," writer Yi Ban describes a group of people who travel to Beijing from all over the country to petition the government to redress wrongs. They end up living under a bridge near a compound of government offices. They scavenge for food. They spend precious money to produce reports on the cor-

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ruption and legal miscarriages with which they hope to impress the central authorities. And they get nowhere. One day, the police come through like a terrible wind and sweep the petitioners away as if they never existed. These workaday tyrannies, more so perhaps than the jailings of high-profile dissidents, may prove cancerous in the long run.

With all the talk of China's rise, it might seem perverse to cast the country as the sick man of Asia. Yet in *China: Fragile Superpower*, Susan Shirk argues that "the weak legitimacy of the Communist Party and its leaders' sense of vulnerability could cause China to behave rashly." Shirk, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Clinton Administration, gives insightful summaries of China's relations with Taiwan and Japan. But her argument about China's potentially rash conduct, like Bush and O'Hanlon's, is based on some farfetched assumptions. Shirk sees China's nationalism as a double-edged sword, one the government wields against its adversaries and finds pressed against its own neck. In order to maintain their own position, Chinese leaders may launch a wag-the-dog invasion of Taiwan—or Hong Kong or Tibet or Xinjiang.

This is possible, but is it probable? Why would Chinese leaders risk the stability they need to maintain economic growth? Nationalism and the pride that comes with becoming once again a world power will more likely have a centripetal rather than centrifugal effect, bolstering the legitimacy of the Communist Party rather than pushing it to bet the house on a military adventure. China has ultimately borrowed a great deal from the West, and this notion of the nation-state, so alien to the Jiaqing Emperor in 1805, will prove the most influential import. Alongside its twenty-first-century economy and twentieth-century political structure, China has a very nineteenth-century sense of nationhood.

In *China Road*, his absorbing chronicle of traveling Route 312 from Shanghai across the expanse of China to the farthest reaches of the Gobi Desert, National Public Radio correspondent Rob Gifford meets a Tibetan who makes his living teaching Chinese to his compatriots. Gifford carefully broaches the subject of betrayal.

"No one blames me," the Tibetan tells him. "There is no other choice. The only way to say I'm not going to take part in this is not to learn Chinese and reject the whole Chinese system. But that would condemn me to poverty." He won't give up his Buddhism, and he will never marry a Han Chinese woman. But otherwise he has decided to trade in the nomadic life, which he says is nothing to romanticize, for the life of an upwardly mobile Chinese citizen. "That is simply today's world. The modern world. The globalized world. I'm not sure we can completely blame the Chinese for that."

Not everyone Gifford meets is so resignedly pragmatic. He talks with Chinese who have eaten more than their fair share of bitterness. Deng Xiaoming, who probably contracted AIDS in a government-sponsored blood-selling scheme gone awry, is so outraged at the failure of the local hospital to save his ailing daughter that he places her corpse in the hospital lobby for all to see. Lao Zhang, a cafe owner in a remote desert oasis, rails against local officials for capping the natural spring in order to profit from their own water sales. In a society that not long ago banned prostitution, Wu Yan sings, gambles and drinks with her clients but makes the most money with the "fourth accompaniment." And the Uighurs of northwest China lament the ongoing colonization of their culture.

Foreign policy analysts speak of various crunches that China will face. There's the demographic one, when China suddenly becomes a senior citizen society virtually overnight because of its one-child policy. There is the economic one, when rapid growth begins to sputter and an angry middle class joins hands with the disenfranchised to close down the party. There's the environmental one, when the poisons of industrial development choke the country to death.

Gifford adds one more to the mix. The central government is rushing against time to make Tibetans, Uighurs and other ethnic minorities into Chinese, much like the French government, as Eugen Weber described it, turned Breton and Provençal peasants into Frenchmen in the nineteenth century. Democracy, as it comes, means giving the vote not just to the 93 percent of the population that is Han Chinese but to the minorities as well. "That's why Beijing is pedaling so fast to try to make Uighurs and Tibetans more 'Chinese,' so that if the crunch comes (or even if it doesn't) they will be too well integrated into China to want to opt out," Gifford argues. Building the nation—not just dams, power plants, tanks and cooperation agreements with other countries—will be the make-or-break project for the next generation of Chinese leaders.

Predicting what will happen with China is a fool's errand. China is the exception that proves so many rules wrong. It is a Communist system that has managed a transition to "capitalism with Chinese characteristics." It has fostered market growth without much political reform. And it has pulled huge swaths of its population out of pov-

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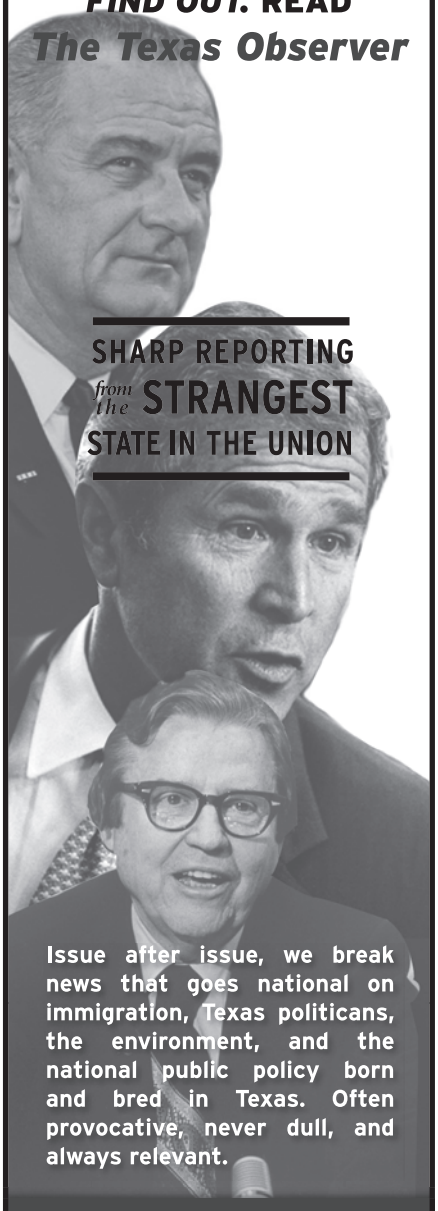

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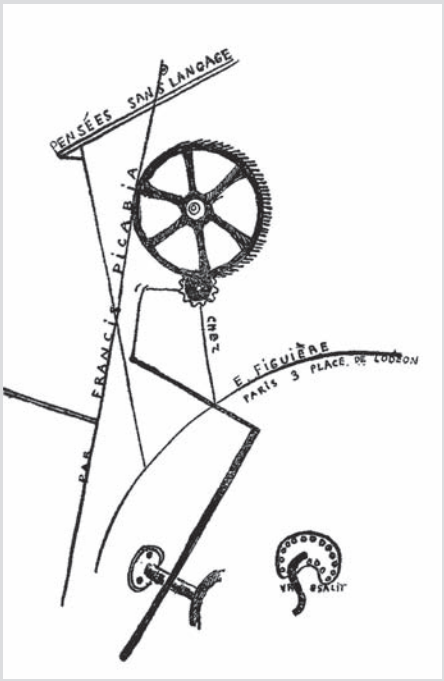

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Picabia's drawing for the cover of *Thoughts Without Language*

The Imperfectionist

by BARRY SCHWABSKY

If a conservative cultural critic were to concoct a derisive portrait of the characteristic avant-garde artist, it would probably turn out to look something like Francis Picabia. Or so one gathers from Marc Lowenthal's account: the sometime Dadaist was "something of an overgrown infant when it came to politics and responsibility," "in many ways a true reactionary," "a scandal-mongering nihilist," "a self-proclaimed egoist" who discarded "morality itself…along with all notions of taste, science, idealism, reality." As a painter he was facile; as a friend and lover, treacherous. He was a poet who didn't like to read, a coward who urged on others the Nietzschean commandment to "live dangerously," a self-promoter whose overwhelming desire for attention led to fierce resentment of anyone sharing the limelight. He was a neurasthenic and, at one point, a drug addict. Above all, he was not only unoriginal—dependent for whatever intellectual weight his work had on the ideas of his more cerebral buddy Marcel Duchamp—but a plagiarist: his most famous paintings were copied from technical drawings of machinery and later ones from girlie magazines, while the aphorisms in which he appeared to be summing up the wisdom of his old age were cribbed from Nietzsche's *Gay Science*.

I Am a Beautiful Monster
Poetry, Prose, and Provocation.
By Francis Picabia.
Translated by Marc Lowenthal.
MIT. 478 pp. $39.95.

The Artwork Caught by the Tail
Francis Picabia and Dada in Paris.
By George Baker.
MIT. 476 pp. $39.95.

If Lowenthal's aim was to bury Picabia, he certainly picked an odd way to do it: translating some two-thirds of the artist's published writings, including all of his poetry, some of which is not even available in the French edition of the poems (published by Editions Mémoire du Livre in 2002 and edited by Carole Boulbès). Possibly the clue to Lowenthal's intention lies in the title he has given his selection: *I Am a Beautiful Monster*. His commentary shows us the monster while the translations reveal the beauty. And yet Lowenthal, who has previously translated the work of Raymond Queneau, nowhere hints that his book was a labor of love for its subject. For him, the fascination with Picabia is rather precisely as a case, that of the "nihilistic spirit" who claimed "the distinction of being the anti-artist par excellence." And yet he might well have asked for Picabia the sort of absolution the painter's great friend Guillaume Apollinaire begged for in his poem "La Jolie Rousse": "Be indulgent when you compare us/To those who have been the perfection of order/We who seek everywhere for adventure…/Pity us who always fight in the front lines/Of the limitlessness and the future/Pity our errors pity our sins." Not that Picabia, who signed himself "Cannibal, Funny Guy, and Failure," would ever have asked for pity, mind you. It was more his style to throw his errors and sins in your face. "Francis Picabia always attacks himself," according to one of his aphorisms.

It wasn't always that way, however. Following an academic training and a Salon debut in 1899, Picabia began painting unpromising landscapes and portraits in a manner based on an already conventional Impressionism and Post-Impressionism; Lowenthal quotes a dispiriting 1907 interview in which the 28-year-old Picabia shows himself to be quite the young fogy: "The first thing a landscapist must be is a conscientious artist.… One should not want to bowl over the public, as so many young people do." By the beginning of the next decade, however, he'd become attached to a Cubism that he practiced without consistency, but he forged friendships with Apollinaire and Duchamp—the latter being nearly the only figure to whom he would remain entirely faithful for life.

For Lowenthal—as for art historian George Baker, an editor at *October* who has written *The Artwork Caught by the Tail*, an ambitious new study of Picabia's work "from the end of the First World War to the begin-

Barry Schwabsky, an American art critic and poet living in London, is co-editor of the international review section of Artforum.

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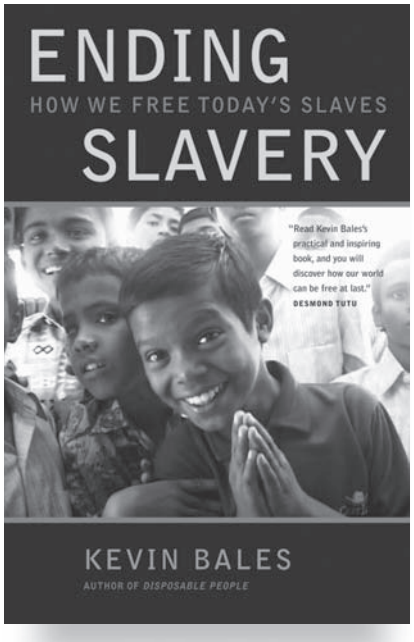
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nings of Surrealism in 1924"—all this is just background. After all, Picabia's first publications date from 1917. Moreover, Lowenthal dates Picabia's Dada years from 1919, and it is the artist's relation to this movement, "one of the finest expressions of nihilism in the twentieth century," that really counts for him. He divides Picabia's production into pre-Dada, Dada and post-Dada phases. Yet consider that Picabia, born in Paris in 1879, was 32 when he met Duchamp, 37 when Dada first emerged at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich in 1917, 38 when his first book of poems was published. Picabia was a generation older than many of his fellow Dadaists, such as Tristan Tzara (born in 1896), Marcel Janco (1895), Richard Huelsenbeck (1892) and Hannah Höch (1889). So while the prevailing image of Dada as a movement of angry young men (and a few women) in revolt against the collective madness of the Great War is not wrong, it hardly describes Picabia, who was already middle-aged when the war began and who escaped it, like Duchamp, by decamping to New York. Whatever brought about the massive change from his earlier conservatism, the motivations must have been very different from those of a 20-year-old like Tzara.

In any case, a reading of Picabia's remarkable poetry suggests that using Dada as a key to unlock it would be misleading at best. It may be more than just a reluctance to cross the boundary between academic disciplines that kept Baker, whose study comprises knotty but original and often illuminating chapters on Dada drawing, Dada painting, Dada photography, Dada abstraction, Dada cinema and Dada montage, from attempting an analysis of Dada poetry as well, despite the fact that his book covers the years when Picabia produced far more poetry than art. It's as though Picabia's poetry was never quite Dada. And even as far as art goes, Baker eventually has to entertain the possibility that "Dada for Picabia had been one great detour."

Although each of Picabia's books or smaller collections of poetry, from *Fifty-Two Mirrors* in 1917 to *Are We Not Betrayed by Seriousness* in 1950, has its own particular tone or structure, there are really just two phases to Picabia's poetry. He began writing the poems collected in *Fifty-Two Mirrors* in 1914 but achieved a furious productivity in 1917–20, following that first book with as many as three in 1918 and two each in 1919 and 1920. Picabia's poetic production was then sporadic through the rest of the '20s and apparently nil for the next decade until the breakout of another war in 1939, when a second phase began that would last nearly the rest of his life.

What characterizes the poetry of Picabia's first phase, right from the beginning, is a degree of syntactic and semantic disjunctiveness utterly unique at the time, and certainly surpassing the collagelike effects found in other formally restless French poetry of this period, whether by friends such as Apollinaire and Blaise Cendrars or by figures antipathetic to Picabia, such as Pierre Reverdy, each of whom adhered in his own way to Rimbaud's momentous call for "a long, immense, and reasoned derangement of all the senses." Moreover, some of this work gives every indication of having been produced by techniques of automatic writing that the Surrealists liked to think had entered literature with André Breton and Philippe Soupault's *The Magnetic Fields* in 1920. Picabia was really a forerunner of both Dada, the movement he joined and later rejected, and Surrealism, from which he kept his distance, yet his writing could be far more unpredictable and emotionally pungent than that of most adherents of those movements.

There has probably never been a poetry at once as massively energetic yet as coolly nonchalant as Picabia's in this first phase. But where is the fire-breathing nihilist of legend? His verse contains as much tenderness as fury, as much lyricism and sarcasm—though undoubtedly more bitterness than joy. Breton was on the mark when he wrote to Picabia in 1920, "What always amazes me about you is precisely the opposite of how you were always described to me, that is, your rare ability to love. I told a friend, rather clumsily, that your books have been written in the language of love." Although Picabia had been feverishly devoting himself to poetry in these years, it was of a sort that never would have been written by anyone who considered himself a poet: the poetry of a dilettante. Picabia maintained his work's freshness prepotently by making productive use of distractedness.

In the great essay he wrote to introduce his translations of poems by Reverdy, Kenneth Rexroth distinguished between Apollinaire's collagelike technique, in which "the elements, the primary data of the poetic construction, are narrative or at least informative wholes," and Reverdy's more extreme reduction of those elements to "simple, sensory, emotional or primary informative objects capable of little or no further reduction." Picabia's method differs as much from Apollinaire's as does Reverdy's rapt essentialism. In fact, it is impossible to generalize about the fundamental constituents of Picabia's verbal structures. In his case, for that matter, these poetic molecules tend to be internally twisted or fractured: they have what poet Ron Silliman recently called torque, a

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tendency to veer off unpredictably, producing effects "of far greater power than referential"—think Apollinaire—"or abstract meaning"—as in Reverdy—"would lead one to suspect."

Take a relatively simple poem like "Alas!" from Picabia's second collection, *Poems and Drawings of the Daughter Born Without a Mother* (1918). It starts out with a sort of list whose world-weary tone seems not very different from that of some of Apollinaire's lyrics, yet in its fifth line takes an unexpected turn that by line seven has become very sharp indeed:

Women men
Affairs
A country ambitious
For sovereignty
I love it when someone folds the eyes
Of troubles
Especially in the sea of the thorax

That seventh line is the pivot: proto-Surrealist, torqued sharply within itself, it lends a ricocheting motion to the poem as a whole, which then doubles back and begins critically taking apart the poetic voice he started out with, only to subside into his initial melancholy:

But I'm telling disinterested lies
It's almost the same thing
The soul's truth
Is the great cowardice of academic
arrogance
Looking into your eyes
I'm content
In my forgotten solitude

Other poems, even quite long ones, are much more densely packed, torquing from line to line or within each line the way only the central one of "Alas!" does. One might imagine the results could be exhausting, leaving the reader with no point of reference, but more often Picabia offers a remarkably vivid experience of such poetic turns as phenomena to be savored—poetic plasticity as an end in itself. This is particularly true of extended works like "The Mortician's Athlete"—one better comprehends its highly charged disjunctiveness upon learning that its five "cantos" were composed by taking a quantity of short independent poems and mashing them together without their titles—and Picabia's early masterpiece, "Purring Poetry," over 800 lines of giddy, unpunctuated, uncapitalized, free-associative poetry on love and the gloom of the wartime that had just ended, to which is appended the following note: "This poetry has no beginning or end; imagine that there's no cover and that it is bound with copper rings."

For Lowenthal, the disjunctiveness of Picabia's poetry should be seen as a form of abstraction, comparable to that which would be periodically manifested in his paintings. Which is fair enough, except that in poetry the word "abstraction" connotes something dry, detached and possibly pedantic—"personal removal by the poet," as Frank O'Hara famously put it. Picabia is actually closer to the "personism" that O'Hara set in opposition to abstraction, but which he only half-jokingly considered "so totally opposed to this kind of abstract removal that it is verging on a true abstraction for the first time"—wrongly, since Picabia got there first.

Picabia briefly bruited a post-Dada movement to be called Instantaneism, and what Lowenthal rightly calls his "adherence to the present" is really the substance of what may seem the incoherence or arbitrariness of movement from line to line in his poems. He is so radically focused on the immediate presence of each line that the connections between them can be left to fend for themselves. Meaning exists in the instant, and the instant is continually born anew. As Picabia explained in 1920 to a journalist from, of all places, the proto-Fascist newspaper *L'Action française*, "We paint without worrying about depicting objects, and we write without taking heed of the meaning of words. We seek only the pleasure of expressing ourselves, but we give the sketches we make, the words we string together, a symbolic meaning, a translation value: not just apart from every common convention, but through an unstable, rash convention, which lasts only as long as the very moment we are utilizing it." This adhesion to the instant is linked to the second factor in Picabia's abstraction, which is also a personism, namely, that Picabia's verse rarely lets go of an intense and implicit specificity of address—usually the addressee is a woman—that allows the most important things to remain unsaid, or to be shamelessly revealed, equally, and thanks to which the poem, as O'Hara put it, "is at last between two persons instead of two pages."

Between the two stages of Picabia's poetic career lies his break with Dada and disaffection with any collective avant-garde. Not that he returned to the dreary conservatism of his young manhood; he simply cut his ties and went adrift on his own. Like Giorgio de Chirico, he became one of those artists whose later works were ignored by art history; likewise, his influence as a poet was forgotten. And also, as with de Chirico, his late paintings have since the '80s undergone recurrent spasms of rediscovery that still have not produced a clear picture of his developing thought as an artist. Baker, too, con-

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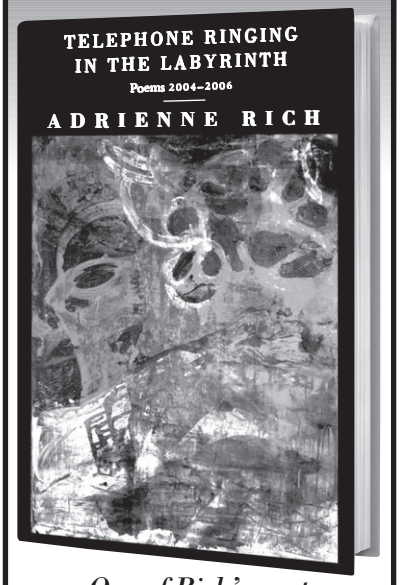

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signing the later work, literary as well as pictorial, to "the cold, hard land of regression and pastiche," turns away from it with relief. If Picabia's early poetry awaits rediscovery, his later work, to some extent, is only now being discovered for the first time.

While Picabia began writing in the shadow of World War I, it merely hovered in the background of most of his early poetry. Twenty-five years later, things would be different; dread of war was the subject that moved him to start writing again: "Since September 1939/the sun seems to have set/everything has grown suspect/everything has grown older/events are nothing more than rumors." Even living in neutral Switzerland, he felt the threat of violence as a personal threat, but also the spur to expression. *Poems of Dingalari*, the posthumously published book written in late 1939, ends with these lines: "One can imagine/a long-range shooting/an exceptionally long one would be needed/for the bullet/to remain in my head/and serve me as a quill/to write this book." Picabia was now writing much differently from twenty years before. His poetry during and after World War II has a new plainness and directness. The exuberance that energized even the most agitated and disturbing images—for instance in the suicide poem "Poison or Revolver"—has turned to a naked melancholy expressed with epigrammatic simplicity.

This new aphoristic tendency is at the heart of what Lowenthal seems to consider his great feat of literary detective work, the discovery that some of Picabia's late writing, and in particular much of *Chi-Lo-Sa*, a book of brief aphorism-like poems published in 1950, is taken directly from Nietzsche. Is Lowenthal right to see Picabia's book as a simple plagiarism of *The Gay Science*? Even those who agree with Picabia that "if the work of another translates my dream, his work is mine" might concur with Lowenthal that *Chi-Lo-Sa* makes for "an uncomfortable reading experience" once one recognizes the recurrent source. And yet a comparison between Picabia's versions and the "originals" cited in Lowenthal's notes shows that Picabia has adapted and sometimes inverted Nietzsche's thought to a degree Lowenthal does not acknowledge.

Given that Lowenthal seems to have finished his labors having less respect for Picabia than he may have started out with, it is all the more remarkable that he has presented such a scrupulous translation, one certain to be a standard work for a long time. But it is not the work of a poet. Compare Lowenthal's version of the first poem from *Are We Not Betrayed by Seriousness* with the same one from a version of the book (*Are We Not Betrayed by Importance*) recently published in a microscopic edition by the Massachusetts-based poet Geoffrey Young. Here's Lowenthal, who titles the poem "Incapable Intoxication": "I fear that your memory/is going with you/your lips are going to leave/my lips/your heart/left/just like the rest." And here's Young's version of the same work, called "Drunken Stumbling":

I'm afraid that your memory
will go when you go
your lips
will leave
my lips
your heart
be gone
with the rest

Both versions accurately convey the sense of the original, except for Young's slight but justifiable liberty with the title, but Young's brings it into sharper focus while maintaining an intimacy that gets lost in Lowenthal's translation. Likewise, within *I Am a Beautiful Monster* itself, the one piece translated by a different hand, *Jesus Christ Rastaquouère*, shows a distinctly higher level of linguistic verve in a version by poet and art critic Raphael Rubinstein (who, I should disclose, for a long time used to edit my occasional contributions to *Art in America*). Still, the completeness of Lowenthal's edition makes it invaluable, and it will be a benchmark against which future translations of particular works can be measured, and which one hopes at least some of them will surpass. ■

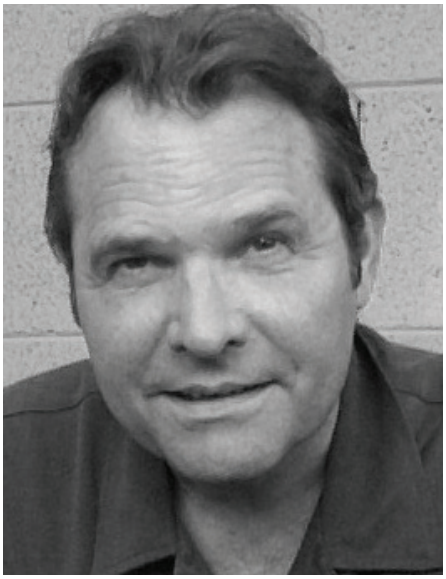
Gracelands

By KEITH GESSEN

Denis Johnson's first and only book of stories, *Jesus' Son*, was a classic the moment it appeared in 1992—this was immediately clear to anyone who read it. But a classic of what? This was less clear. In subject matter, extreme brevity and partly in tone—the stories read as if they'd been scraped from the insides of an already empty man—it continued the hard-boiled minimalism of Raymond Carver, Richard Ford and Tobias Wolff. But the book was also about hitchhikers, misfits and especially drug addicts—its title came from the Velvet Underground's ode to heroin—and this put it in a different tradition, less of Carver's suburban miniatures of desperation than of the American hopped-up song of the open road.

You couldn't help asking this genealogical question—was Johnson writing about the way history crushes people or about how people escape?—because the book itself refused to say. All the characters were lost, unreliable, wandering nowhere. The narrator occasionally wrote pure hallucinatory poetry, but more often he was laconic to the point of evasion. Here he was driving down a road from a farm where his friend had just been shot: "What can be said about those fields? There were blackbirds circling above their own shadows, and beneath them the cows stood around smelling one another's butts." Here he was with his friend Wayne, visiting a woman Wayne knew on some deserted stretch of road: "I don't know what they said to one another. She walked down the steps, and Wayne followed.... She was about forty, with a bloodless, waterlogged beauty. I guessed Wayne was the storm that had stranded her here." Everyone in the book had been stranded by some such storm, but the more general storm remained obscure.

Johnson's novels were far more diffuse than *Jesus' Son* and allowed the reader some time to think, though they, too, described people in the wake of some catastrophe that had left them hollowed out. *Angels* (1983), his first novel, begins with Jamie Mays boarding a Greyhound bus to escape her abusive husband; on the bus she meets Bill Houston, a charming drifter, also on the run. They are



CINDY JOHNSON

Denis Johnson, 2006

Tree of Smoke
By Denis Johnson.
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 614 pp. $27.

Keith Gessen is co-editor of n+1. *His first book,* All the Sad Young Literary Men, *will be out next year.*

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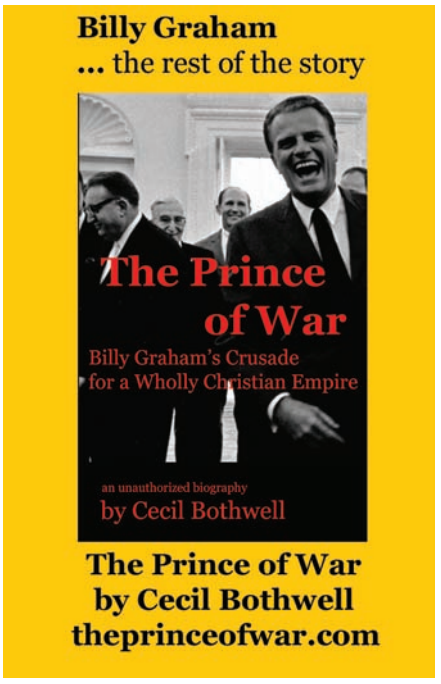
the angels of the title, and on that bus they get drunk. Johnson's second novel, *Fiskadoro* (1985), is set on the Florida coast in the aftermath of a cold war nuclear exchange; *Resuscitation of a Hanged Man* (1991) is about a youngish salesman who, having attempted suicide, moves to Provincetown, Massachusetts, to sort out his life (and, seeing the wild sexual profusion of the place, immediately regrets it). For all their troubles, Johnson's characters are oddly cheerful; they live on slimmer margins than many people, and when they slip up they often land in jail—but they seem to like it in jail. Their response to vicious violence is not so much grievance as surprise—"You shot me!" a man says to his wife, after she shoots him. They are drug addicts and alcoholics and depressives, but only because they want to be; Johnson's world of losers is a democratic one, in which controlled substances are a form of transcendence; for many of the characters, the drugs are the only chance at transcendence they're going to get.

Taken together, these books, set in the late 1970s and early '80s (though also, very notably in *Fiskadoro*, in a postapocalyptic wasteland), read like a dispatch from a particular American world. They told the story of an entire country, the novels beginning at the edges—southern Florida, Provincetown, the California coast—and then moving inland. Often, in fact, they began with driving scenes, descriptions of highways, as if the author were stretching his legs. But for all the specific place names, this America could not be pointed out on a map. It was an America in which, for certain people and without proximate causes, things had gone wrong. The characters had been lumpenized, dislodged from their rightful place by a cataclysm, a storm, and they didn't know how to get back to land. Gradually, as one read more of Johnson, the name of the storm became clear. Either because the characters had been through it, or were surrounded by people who had been through it, or lived with a kind of collective memory of it: no matter where in America they ended up in those years, the storm was Vietnam.

To finally read an entire novel by Johnson about Vietnam, after watching it hover in the background of all his other work, is to witness an extended primal scene. And in fact *Tree of Smoke* opens with a primal scene. It is 1963, and Bill Houston, who was last seen at the end of *Angels* being administered a lethal gas by the state, is a young sailor on his first tour in the Pacific. On the night of November 22 he wakes up to the news that President John F. Kennedy has been assassinated. A few hours later he watches an officer step out of a hut (he has been with a woman) and relieve himself on the ground; and not long after that, Houston watches the same officer walk into a bar and unleash the first of the book's many virtuoso verbal eruptions:

> "Colonel, they caught him," [the bartender] Sam told the officer. "His name is Oswald."
>
> The colonel said, "What kind of name is that?"—apparently as outraged by the killer's name as by his atrocity.
>
> "Fucking sonofabitch," Sam said.
>
> "The sonofabitch," said the colonel. "I hope they shoot his balls off. I hope they shoot him up the ass." Wiping at his tears without embarrassment he said, "Is Oswald his first name or his last name?"
>
> Houston told himself that first he'd seen this officer pissing on the



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ground, and now he was watching him cry.

The colonel, as we later learn, is a legendary combat veteran, now a CIA psy-ops chieftain; he is also an old Boston Catholic, and his unembarrassed tears over the death of Kennedy, with young Bill Houston watching, are like nothing so much as the tears of the blaspheming Mr. Casey at the dinner table in the first chapter of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: "Poor Parnell! he cried loudly. My dead king!" That book is about learning gradually that you belong to a fallen race; over the course of this one, Bill Houston will learn it too.

Tree of Smoke traces the gradual American descent into Vietnam. It follows Bill Houston through his two tours with the Navy; Bill's younger brother James, who joins the Army in 1967, just in time for the Tet offensive; the cursing Colonel Sands from the first scene; his nephew Skip Sands, a young CIA operative; and a Vietnamese family collaborating with the Americans. Skip is the book's central character: his uncle has assigned him the quixotic task of compiling a gigantic catalogue of *all* known information gathered by the CIA on Vietnam. The code name for this catalogue, which is recorded exclusively on index cards and occupies several footlockers that Skip transports from the Philippines to the States to Saigon, is the Tree of Smoke of the title, and in the process of refreshing the catalogue Skip gradually loses interest in the war.

Skip is a cipher at the center of the book, slowly drifting into madness; but the soldiers in the book, primarily the Houston brothers and a Vietcong double agent named Trung Tran, meanwhile spin out at great velocity. Johnson rarely writes so well as when he is describing their experiences of the world. Here, for example, is how Bill Houston leaves the Navy in 1968:

> Three weeks short of his scheduled release from the navy, Bill Houston had a fight with a black man in the Yokosuka enlisted mess, in the kitchen, where he'd been detailed with three other sailors to paint the walls. Houston's unvaried style of attack was to come in low and fast, get his left shoulder into the other man's midriff while hooking his left arm behind the man's knee, and upend them both so that Houston came down on top, driving his shoulder into the solar plexus with his full weight behind it. He practiced other moves as well, because he considered fighting important, but this opening generally worked with the tough opponents, the ones who stood their ground and raised their dukes.

This description is typical of Johnson—it is poised on a knife's edge between pure pathos (a white man fighting a black man, hopelessly, in a kitchen of an American Army base in a foreign country in 1968) and pure comedy (the move Houston practices is a preposterous one, at least for practicing). But the key clause, the knife's edge itself, is "because he considered fighting important." It *is* important—and ridiculous. In other words, Johnson takes Bill Houston seriously—but not more seriously than he takes himself.

A few weeks later, Houston is a civilian again:

> He encountered the outskirts of Phoenix sooner than he'd expected. It was much more of a city now, tires wailing on Interstate Ten and loud jet airliners coming in overhead, their lights shimmering in the blue desert twilight. What time was it? He didn't have a watch. In fact, what day? Houston stood at Seventeenth and Thomas under a broken streetlamp. He had thirty-seven dollars. He was twenty-two years old. He hadn't tasted beer in almost a month. Lacking a plan, he phoned his mother.

Once we learn about Houston's mother, we realize this wasn't much of a plan at all.

One of Skip's psy-ops assignments for the colonel is to explore the myths of the local population—their demon myths in particular. The colonel is obsessed with breaking up the network, partly mythical, of the Vietcong tunnels that form a separate universe below the ground and below human perception.

For all his interest in visceral American language and experience, Johnson has also always operated at the underground level of myth and demons. The organization of *Tree of Smoke* along simple chronology—1963 followed by 1964, as advisers are followed by helicopters are followed by the Gulf of Tonkin—cannot obscure the deeper logic that draws the country into war. There is the logic of the planners, who know well in advance just what's going to happen: in 1966, a drunken Bill Houston and another sailor are suddenly confronted while on shore leave by a uniformed admiral, who wants to know if

Godzilla in Mexico

Listen carefully, my son: bombs were falling
over Mexico City
but no one even noticed.
The air carried poison through
the streets and open windows.
You'd just finished eating and were watching
cartoons on TV.
I was reading in the bedroom next door
when I realized we were going to die.
Despite the dizziness and nausea I dragged myself
to the kitchen and found you on the floor.
We hugged. You asked what was happening
and I didn't tell you we were on death's program
but instead that we were going on a journey,
one more, together, and that you shouldn't be afraid.
When it left, death didn't even
close our eyes.
What are we? you asked a week or year later,
Ants, bees, wrong numbers
in the big rotten soup of chance?
We're human beings, my son, almost birds,
public heroes and secrets.

ROBERTO BOLAÑO
(translated from the Spanish by Laura Healy)

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they're having a nice time. They say they are and give him the finger. "I hope like hell you are," counters the admiral. "Because hard times are coming for assholes like you." There is the logic of American intelligence gathering, corrupted (in one of Johnson's clearest references to the current situation in Iraq) by the desires of the planners. And there is the logic of American obligation, noblesse oblige in the form of helicopter gunships. With his signature sympathy, Johnson traces the fate of the Vietnamese family that has decided to work with the Americans. "The Americans had remembered," the head of the family thinks late in the book after they are evacuated to Malaysia, "had kept their promises to him, and even to his country. They hadn't failed to keep such a promise. They'd simply lost the war."

Above all there is the logic of American life—and how it brutalizes the segment of the population left behind by the changes in the American economy after 1945. Vietnam is the most violent, loudest expression of this change—but it hardly exhausts it. Powerless stateside, the characters seek to alter their fates in any way they can. Bill signs up for another tour because he is "enchanted above all by the power to create his destiny just by signing his name." James enlists for the money and the adventure. On his last night in Arizona, he gets abjectly drunk around his friends. "They threw him on the ground and hosed him down. The dirt turned to slime around him and he crouched in it, flailing, trying to stand upright." This is a world where the police, the Army and one's friends from home cease to be distinguishable in any meaningful way. Step to the left and you are in prison; step to the right and you're in the Army. Keep going forward and you're stuck in some awful job. At least in Vietnam you get to shoot people.

The most devastating passages in *Tree of Smoke* describe not the terrors of war but the terrors of home in an era of industrial consolidation and blue-collar defeat. Bill Houston's first job after he returns home and calls his mother is as the nighttime cleanup man at a giant cement concern:

> He made a circuit among the maze of conveyor belts under gargantuan crushers and was never done. The next evening the same belts, the same motions, even some of the same pebbles and rocks, it stood to reason, and the same cold take-out burger for lunch at the dusty table in the manager's trailer at 2:00 a.m.; washing his hands and face first in the narrow john, his thick neck brown as a bear's, sucking water up his nostrils and expelling the dust in liverish clumps.

Bill Houston can't stand it. He starts drinking heavily and ends up in prison. Two-hundred and fifty pages later, he is back at work, this time driving a forklift at a lumberyard, where "all day from massive trucks to massive sheds he moved tons and tons of puke-smelling fresh-cut boards, and he never built anything but rectilinear stacks, and little by little he dismantled them." This is grim, and it does remind you of those other American and British writers of factory work, the crushing of the spirit by the mechanization of labor.

But Johnson is not a Dreiser, watching as mighty forces grind his characters to dust. The wonderful, exuberant and original thing about him as a writer is his insistence that within the soul-destroying unfreedom of American life there are always moments of freedom, humor and grace—"stolen," as Bill Houston puts it, remembering rushed cigarettes in the high school bathroom, "from the whole world." Bill and James Houston will end their lives trying to rob a bank in *Angels*—"the greatest crime on earth," as another imprisoned Johnson character calls it, with characteristic good humor, in *Resuscitation of a Hanged Man*—but even with his final breaths Bill finds himself immensely joyful at each successive one. These counter-notes, which appear throughout Johnson's books and in *Tree of Smoke* in particular—which contains some of the richest, most surprising and least affected American dialogue I have ever read, as if the characters themselves were breaking free of their author—reveal the third and perhaps most powerful strain in Johnson's work. In addition to the Hemingway-Carver minimalist strain and the Kerouac-Burroughs hopped-up strain there is the Catholic strain of spiritual agony and transcendence, in which his two closest kin are Flannery O'Connor and Don DeLillo.

For Johnson, Vietnam cannot be an end to American innocence or a fall from grace any more than September 11 or the invasion of Iraq can—America had already fallen from grace, long ago. To forget that and then, having forgotten it, to invade another country; to then claim that it is necessary to invade yet another country (Cambodia, in this instance) to help prosecute the war in the first country—well, that's a sin.

What do you do, how do you recover, how do you receive grace again? "You think we'll actually lose?" Skip asks his uncle in *Tree of Smoke*. "Is that what you think, ultimately?"

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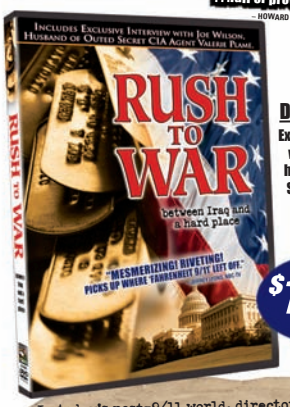
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"Ultimately?" His uncle seemed surprised by the word. "Ultimately I think… we'll be forgiven. I believe we'll wander in the darkness for a good long time, and some of what we do here will never be made right, but we will be forgiven."

It's not an entirely satisfactory answer—as if the troubles of the jungles and fields of Vietnam, poisoned by American chemical bombardment, or the plains of the American Midwest, taken from the people who used to farm them, were a simple matter of forgiveness. But to confess your sins is, at least, the beginning of grace. With *Tree of Smoke*, Johnson has completed, in reverse chronological order, a moral and mythic history for the twenty-year period between the Kennedy assassination and the first years of the Reagan revolution. Is anyone so vain as to think we no longer inhabit the world he has described? ■

Events

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■ Join us to honor the life and enduring contribution of Moe Fishman, the voice of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Music, speakers, memories, inspiration and refreshments. All are invited. Feel free to bring copies of memorabilia, photographs, letters and poetry to add to a timeline banner of Moe's life. Saturday, November 10, 10:30 AM. Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Square South. Accessible entrance on Thompson Street. In Moe's memory, friends and family of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade are organizing to carry Moe's activist vision to future generations. If you would like to be part of Friends and Family or would like information about the memorial, call (212) 989-8624.

Universal Health Care Foundation of New York

■ Inaugural reception, October 30, 5–7 PM at Cherkasky-Davis Conference Center, SEIU-1199, 330 West 42nd Street, 33rd floor. Honor outstanding leaders and organizations that have contributed greatly to the universal healthcare movement: Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, Dr. Oliver Fein and the NY State Nurses Association. For invitations to the reception and information about the foundation, visit www.rekindlingreform.org/topic/index.htm, e-mail loulevi@aol.com or write Universal Health Care Foundation of New York, 155 West 72nd Street, Suite 402, New York, NY 10023.

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The New SPACE

■ The New SPACE (School for Pluralistic Anti-Capitalist Education) presents: (I) Class: reading Hegel's preface to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Tuesdays beginning October 30, 7–9 PM; (II) Talk: "No! G8 Action: The Japanese Left Organizes for the 2008 Anti-G8 Protest," Wednesday, October 31, 7:30 PM. Class and talk will be at TRS Inc., 44 East 32nd Street. Also, (III) Book launch: *Reclaiming Marx's* Capital*: A Refutation of the Myth of Inconsistency* by Andrew Kliman, with the author and speakers Stanley Aronowitz, Bertell Ollman and Rick Wolff. Thursday, November 8, 7 PM, at CUNY Grad Center, 365 Fifth Avenue, Sociology Lounge, Room 6112. Info: http://new-space.mahost.org, new-space@mutualaid.org or call (800) 377-6183.

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HARTFORD DISCUSSION GROUP. They are still meeting on the first Sunday of the month between 2 and 4 PM, but they are now meeting at The Hartford Quaker Meeting House 144 S. Quaker Lane, West Hartford, CT (between Boulevard and Farmington Avenue).

ORGANIZATIONS

MEMPHIS, TN, *Nation* discussion group forming. E-mail heidikenaga@yahoo.com if you're interested in joining.

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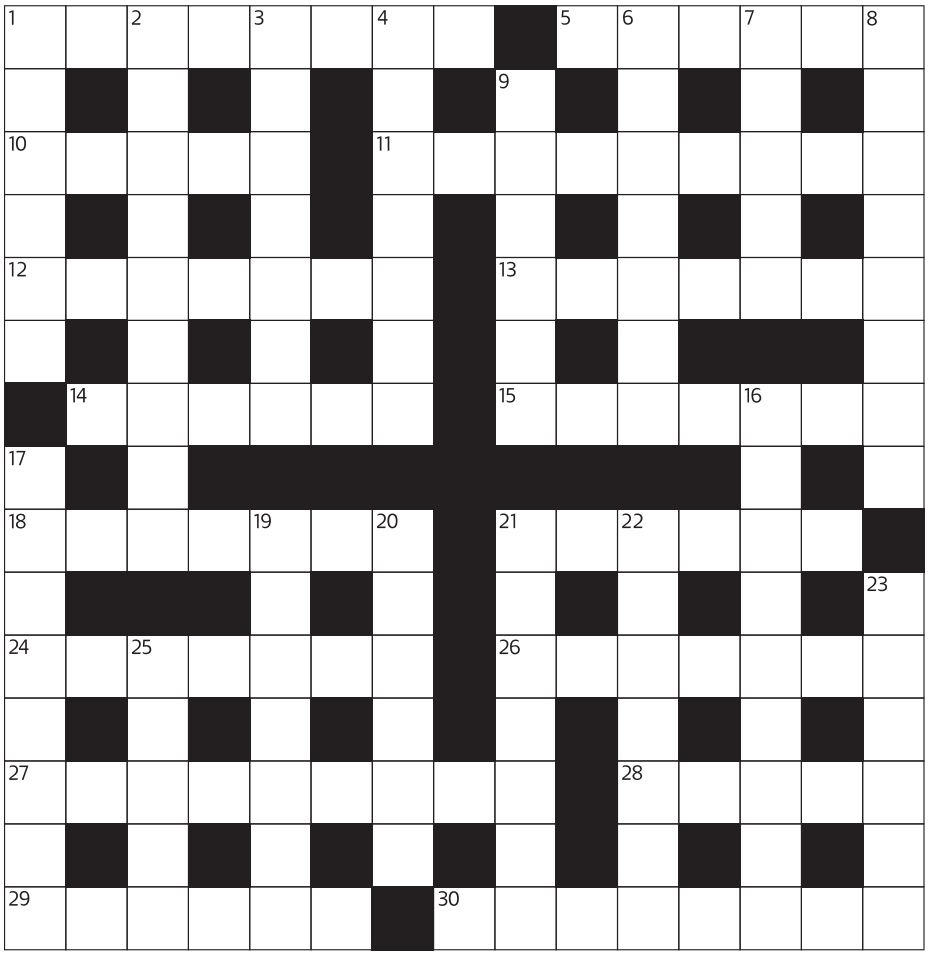
Puzzle No. 3101

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Noah's craft, like around the intelligence agency, is a state exhibit. (8)

5 and **17** down An article, with the mail being sorted—kinda crazy as they say, to portray little lions and tigers and such—childish fare. (6,8)

10 Fast, like a lot of boats. (5)

11 If you spill pool sloppily, you'll end up with suckers. (9)

12 Sounds repetitious this way. (7)

13 What comes in and goes out comes back with stirrred gin, making sure the print is correct. (7)

14 The gullible are this in the way straw might be. (6)

15 More than one continental sort needed to make this, a sure A-one performance. (7)

18 In a fluster, but still contributing to the easy life. (7)

21 Notices in the paper they're about fighting—exemplified by Tony or Emmy. (6)

24 To arrive is about standard for it—supposedly to make an odious comment. (7)

26 One might be intended for such as Paul, though for us it's just a fancy letter. (7)

27 The whole one is often referred to as being totally the sort of niche where a boy finds a final spot. (9)

28 Goes a different way for a tribesman. (5)

29 Obis might give some point to what's left after the fire. (6)

30 Went down the gangplank? That's what Rover did, indeed! (8)

DOWN

1 Some say he was great, but more like Jolson and Astaire. (6)

2 Does something when the tar is bad, when something like an onion comes up with what the bank robber makes. (9)

3 Possibly can, when rising, find a tool for what the extremely fussy type might do. (7)

4 Said to be without proof—everything, for instance, the editor shortly puts out. (7)

6 With the sound higher, I rose in this with a certain amount of trouble. (7)

7 Live in the Antipodes—or am I wrong? (5)

8 Italian dishes, alas in trouble, when a bad snag results with them. (8)

9 Jason stole it, as they sometimes do with suckers. (6)

16 Not the main line, and sort of dies on what they sometimes do to the game—as a way to shove the unwanted business out. (9)

17 See 5 across

19 Put some old cloth in what was done with the papers, being rather delicate. (7)

20 The manner of a Confederate general offers a bit of elbow room. (6)

21 Make a statement about how old you are, which may be about the middle. (7)

22 The state of the sunken ship shows there is something to sing about the incomplete area. (7)

23 Cranky babies might like to, and looked this way. (6)

25 Ridicules the smock worn back to front, but imitates it anyway. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3100

D	E	L	I	V	E	R	■	S	H	A	L	L	O	W
E	■	O	■	I	■	E	■	T	■	N	■	I	■	O
P	R	O	V	O	K	E	■	I	N	T	E	G	E	R
L	■	S	■	L	■	F	■	N	■	I	■	H	■	K
O	P	E	R	A	■	E	G	G	■	C	U	T	I	E
Y	■	N	■	■	■	R	■	E	■	■	■	E	■	R
S	A	S	H	A	Y	S	■	R	E	P	O	R	T	S
■	■	■	■	L	■	■	■	■	■	A	■	■	■	■
S	P	O	I	L	E	D	■	C	I	T	I	Z	E	N
O	■	P	■	■	■	R	■	O	■	■	■	E	■	O
M	I	T	E	R	■	E	L	M	■	T	E	N	T	S
E	■	I	■	O	■	S	■	E	■	H	■	N	■	E
O	S	M	O	S	I	S	■	E	X	U	D	I	N	G
N	■	U	■	I	■	E	■	T	■	M	■	A	■	A
E	R	M	I	N	E	S	■	E	M	B	A	S	S	Y

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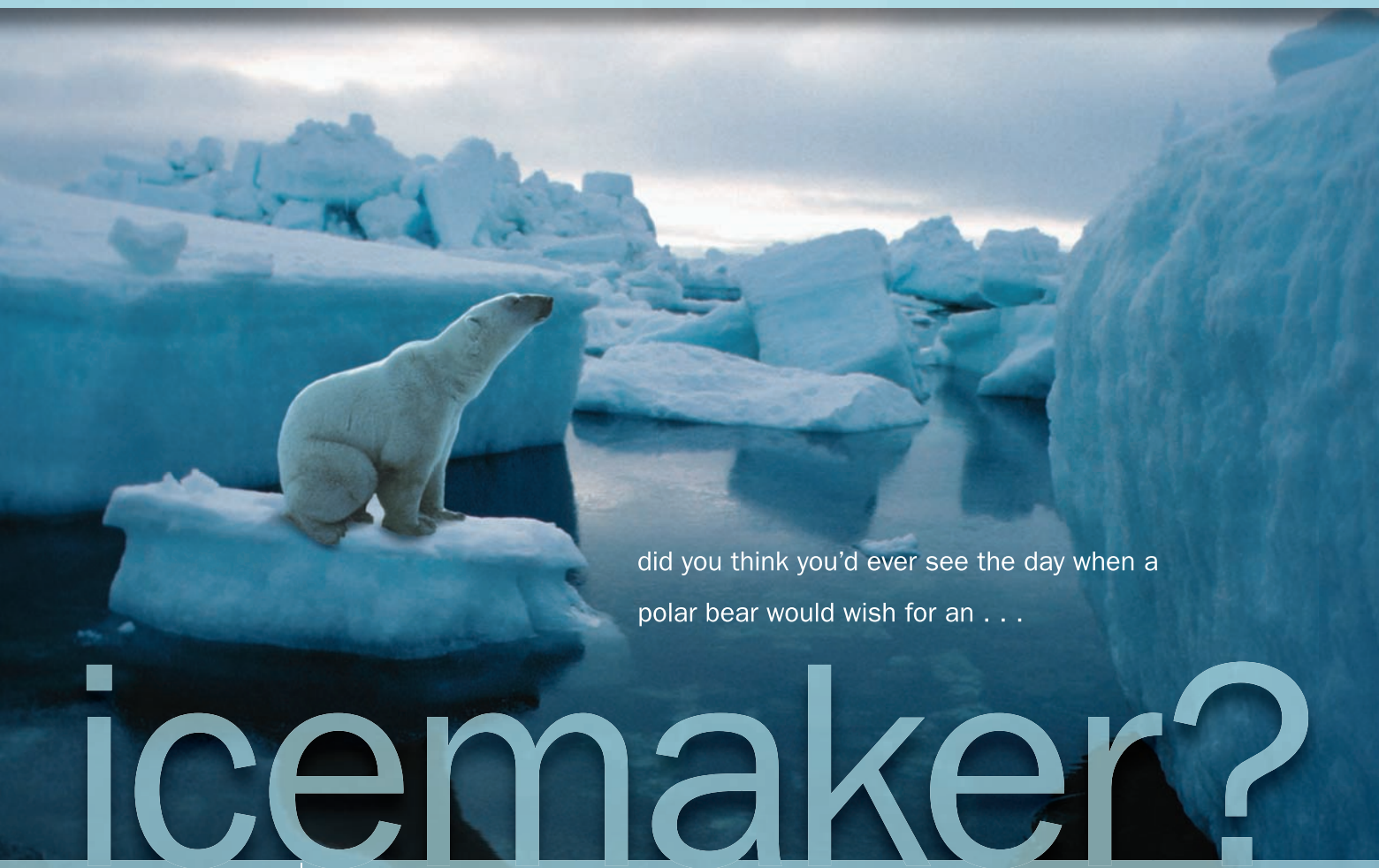

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polar bear would wish for an . . .

icemaker?

400 exhibits:

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- green finances
- eco-fashion
- natural health and body
- green media
- community action
- **green technology**
- natural home and garden
- **deep ecology**
- green business practices
- fair trade
- renewable energy
- **conservation/recycling**
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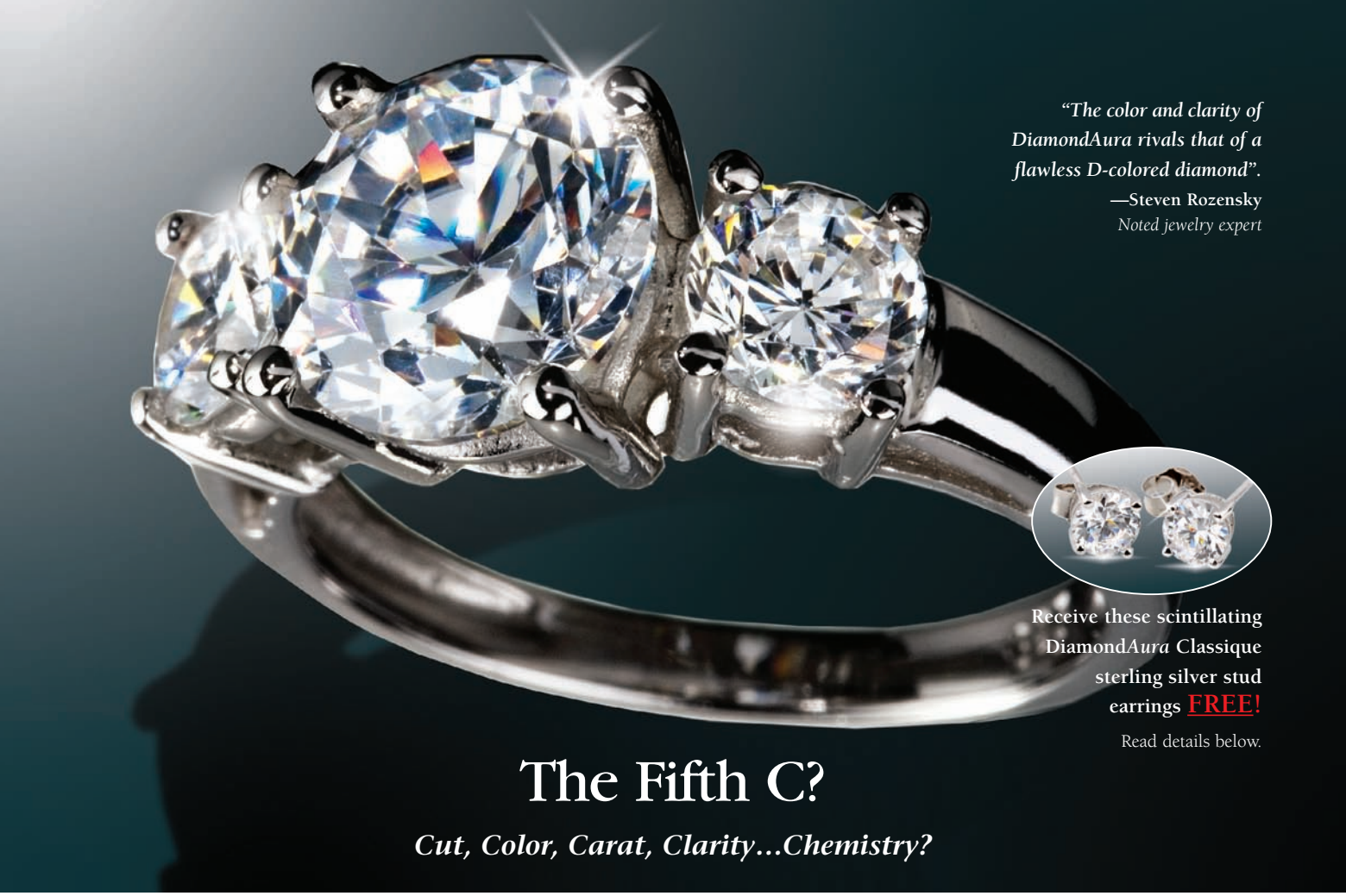

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	Mined Flawless Diamond	Diamond*Aura* Compares to:
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Cut (58 facets)	Brilliant	Brilliant
Color	"D" Colorless	"D" Colorless
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2.5 c.t.w. ring	$60,000+	$145

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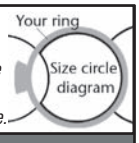
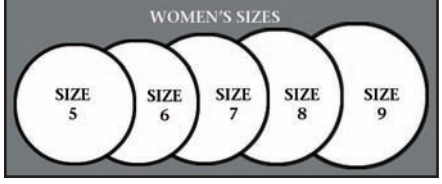
Place one of your own rings on top of one of the circle diagrams. Your ring size is the circle that matches the inside diameter of your ring. If your ring falls between sizes, order the next larger size.





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